

FRANK HARRIS

DAUGHTERS OF EVE

Including Frank Harris
SET DOWN IN MALICE
By Gerald Cumberland

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FRANK HARRIS
Set Down in Malice
By GERALD CUMBERLAND

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LONDON

IT MUST have been five or six years ago that a friend came to me with the news that Frank Harris had expressed a desire to see some of my verse. Precisely what my friend had told Harris about me, I do not know; something very exaggerated, perhaps; something complimentary, doubtless; something that piqued Harris's curiosity, it was evident. As Harris is one of the few modern writers for whom my boyish admiration has survived manhood, I felt subtly gratified that he should take even a fleeting interest in me, and I sat down at once and copied out various poems that had already appeared in *The Academy*, under Lord Alfred Douglas's editorship, and in *The English Review* in the days of Ford Madox Hueffer, and, more recently, when edited by Austin Harrison. With my verses I sent a letter, hypocritically modest as regards myself, honestly full of admiration as regards Harris. He replied from his villa in Nice, sending me a long letter in which he did me the honour to enter fully into the supposed merits and demerits of my work. Of one poem he said that it was not sufficiently sensual, and I have never been able quite to understand what he meant, for I had, with some particularity, described seven naked ladies swimming in a pool, and I had felt that my verses had obviously enough expressed my feelings.

The correspondence continued until, one day, Harris wrote to tell me he was returning to London and to invite me to visit him there. In the event, however, my first meeting with Harris was in Manchester, whither he came to lecture on Shakespeare to the local dramatic society. Jack Kahane (a great friend of mine) and I met him at the Midland Hotel upon his arrival, and from the very first moment he intoxicated me. Whilst he changed from his travelling clothes to evening dress he talked and ejaculated, beseeching us to remain with him as he had had "a rotten journey from London and felt unutterably bored." I remember very little of what he said except that, with some venom, he called Browning "a not unprosperous gentleman." He refused to eat or drink before his lecture and, presently, we went down to the large room in the hotel where he was to speak.

We found there a mixed assembly. Everybody in Manchester, it

should be explained, writes plays; at least, I never yet met a man in that delectable city who does not. Moreover, they “study” them. They weigh and compare the merits of Stanley Houghton and Ibsen, Harold Brighouse and Strindberg, Allan Monkhouse and Bjornson, Arnold Bennett and Hauptmann, Laurence Housman and Brioux, and so forth. They search for “inner meanings”; the more earnest of them hunt for “messages”; the more delicate seek to perceive Fine Shades. They are veritable disciples of Miss Horniman—priggishly intellectual, self-consciously superior. And, of course, the rock of their salvation is St. Bernard. Innocuous people enough, but impossible to live with in the same city.

To this assembly of earnest, pale men and spectacled women Harris was to lecture, and I looked from them to Harris and from Harris to them with joyful expectations. From the very first sentence he was fiery and provocative, throwing out daring theories, anathematizing all forms of respectability, upholding with unparalleled fierceness a wonderful ideal of chivalry and nobility and condemning, en bloc, the whole human race, and particularly that portion of it seated before him. Ladies rustled; men stirred uneasily. Then, having delivered himself of a passage of hot eloquence, he paused. A clock ticked. He looked defiantly at us and still paused. A fat lady in the front row, palpably embarrassed by the long silence and, no doubt, feeling that she had reached one of the most dramatic moments of her existence, banged her plump hands together and ejaculated: “Bravo!” A few other ladies of both sexes joined her, but Harris was not to be placated. Thrusting out his chin, he began again. And this time he attacked the Mancunian literary idol, Professor C. H. Herford, a great scholar, but a more than suitable object for Harris’s ridicule. Herford is a man who has not lived fully: a semi-invalid, asthmatic, bloodless and spectacled; a man of books and rather dusty books; in effect, a professor. He had recently reviewed Harris’s book, *The Man Shakespeare*, in *The Manchester Guardian*, and had called it “a disgrace to British scholarship.” Why this should have annoyed the author I cannot tell, but Harris is at times a little unreasonable. Indeed, “annoyance” but feebly describes the feeling that spent itself in scalding invective and the most terrible irony. Each sentence he spoke appeared to be the last word in bitterness; but each succeeding sentence leaped above and beyond its predecessor, until at length the speaker had lashed himself into a state of feeling to express which words were useless. He stopped magnificently, and this time the room rang with applause. It is probable that not a half-a-dozen people present believed his attack on Professor Herford was justified; indeed, it is probable that not half-a-dozen were qualified to form any opinion of value on the matter. Nevertheless, they applauded him with enthusiasm, and they did so because they had been deeply stirred by eloquence that can only be described as superb and by anger that was lava hot in its sincerity. Briefly, the lecture was an overwhelming success.

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I was soon to discover that Harris, like all the men of genius I have met, is vain. I do not mean that he overrates his gifts; he does not; nor that his recognition of his own genius is offensively insistent: such is very far from being the case. I mean that he is inordinately proud, innocently and childlikely proud, of things that are not of the last consequence. At supper in the French Restaurant the head waiter slipped noiselessly across to the table at which Harris, Kahane and I were sitting. (Harris is the kind of a man who acts as a magnet to all head waiters—a high tribute to his dominating personality.) When our orders had been given the waiter, turning to go, said: “Very good, Mr. Harris.” On the instant Harris looked up. “So you know me?” he asked. “Yes, sir. I have had the pleasure of waiting on you in Monte Carlo and, if I am not mistaken, in New York as well.” It is difficult to describe the naive pleasure Harris took in this: it stamped him at once as a man of the world—he who, of all people, required, in our opinion, no such stamp.

For six hours we talked—talked long after every other visitor in the hotel had retired, and we were left alone in the Octagon Court in a pool of dim light. Harris is the only brilliant talker I have met who has not made me feel an abject idiot. To begin with, though he has a pronounced strain of violence, almost of brutality, in his nature, he is always infinitely courteous. He will listen to your (I mean my) feeble contributions to a discussion with interest which, if feigned, is so admirably feigned that you are completely deceived. And he can keep this sort of thing up indefinitely. Moreover, though his mind is agile enough, his speech is rarely quick; it is slow and deliberate, but without hesitation, without a single word of tautology.

I cannot hope, after so long a lapse of time, to reproduce, however faintly, the true quality of Harris’s conversation, but I remember the substance of it most vividly. In his lecture earlier in the evening he had mentioned Jesus Christ, and the reference to our Saviour had been so original in its implication, yet so reverent in its manner, that I felt he must have much that is new to say on a subject that has aroused more discussion than any other during the last two thousand years. So I broached it tentatively. He was aroused immediately, and skilfully drew me out to discover if I had anything new to say. I had not. I merely voiced what must be an age-long regret, that only one side of Christ’s nature has been presented to us in the Gospels; that the feasting, joyous Christ has been only faintly indicated; and that His tolerance towards the weaknesses of the body’s passions had always been shirked by those of the priestly craft. It thought it possible that at some future crisis in the world’s history Christ might come again and, on His second coming, present to the world a more complete embodiment of all the potentialities inherent in human nature.

With much of this Harris agreed, though I soon perceived that his mind had for long been intuitively building up, and giving true proportion to, those elements in Christ’s nature that are only hinted

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at in the Gospels. He was all for a full-blooded, passionate Jesus, for a Jesus who had tested the body's powers, for a Jesus who was crucified by passion before He was crucified by Pilate. In a word, he applied to Jesus the same intuitive method that he had already applied to Shakespeare. The danger of his method, of course, is that one is tempted (and it is almost impossible not to succumb to the temptation) to project One's own personality into that of the man one is studying.

"My next book shall be about Jesus Christ," said Harris. "No man in these days has written honestly about Him." -

"Shall you write as a believer?" I asked.

"Most assuredly," he replied.

Then Harris told us some stories—stories he had written, stories he had yet to write. I remember Austin Harrison once saying to me: "Frank Harris is the most astounding creature! He will tell you a story and tell it so marvellously that, when he has finished, you say to yourself: 'That is the most wonderful thing I have ever heard.' And you say to him: 'Why, in God's name, don't you write that?' Well, he does write it, and when you read it you see that, after all, it is by no means so wonderful a thing as you had thought it." But this is only half true. The story that is told is a very different thing from the story that is written: so different, indeed, that one cannot find any basis for comparison. In telling a story Harris is elliptical; a faint gesture serves for a sentence; a momentary silence is an innuendo; a lifting of the eyebrows, a look, a dropping of the voice, a slowness in his speech—all these take the place of words. He is an exquisite actor and he is at his best when he is sinister and menacing. One need scarcely say that the effect of one of Harris's stories, told in private, with only one or two listeners, is extremely powerful, for his personality, so quick to melt and suffuse his speech—colouring it and vitalising it—is strong and strange and full of tropical richness. . . .

But the actor's gift is not rare, whereas that combination of talents that makes a great short-story writer is met with only once or twice in a generation. Harris's claims to greatness in this direction cannot justly be denied, though of late years there has been a noticeable tendency to treat his work as though it were not of first-rate importance. His choice of subject, the violence of his thought, his strict honesty of mind, his open contempt for many of his contemporaries—these have brought him enemies whose only method of retaliation is to decry work they will not understand.

But Harris could not be happy without hostility. There is something of the jaguar in his nature; he must, for his soul's peace, have his teeth in the flesh of an enemy. And, if he is not fighting an individual, he is offending society at large. Years ago, so Harris told me, when he was editing *The Fortnightly Review* with such distinction, he printed one of his own short stories in that magazine—a story that, for one reason or another, gave great offence to a large section of readers.

Within twenty-four hours he had a hornet's nest about his ears, and the directors of the firm, Messrs Chapman & Hall, who published the *Fortnightly*, met in solemn conclave to discuss what should be done with so injudicious and reckless an editor. Needless to say, Harris stood by his guns, and one can imagine the splendidly arrogant way in which he would uphold his right to insert anything he chose in a magazine edited by himself. But discussion made matters only more critical, and Harris told me he would have been compelled to hand in his resignation if an unforeseen event had not occurred. That event was the entrance of George Meredith, who, at that time, was a reader for Messrs Chapman & Hall. As soon as his eyes lit on Harris he held out his hand, and walked quickly up to him, saying: "My warmest congratulations! Your story in the new number is quite the finest thing you have done—an honour to yourself And the *Fortnightly*!" That left no further room for discussion and, needless to say, Harris retained his editorship of the great magazine.

My first meeting with Harris was of the friendliest nature, and on his return to London he wrote to me thanking me for something I had written about him in *The Manchester Courier*. (I noticed with amusement that *The Manchester Guardian*, unable, no doubt, to forgive Harris for attacking Professor Herford, had absolutely ignored the Shakespeare lecture, except to announce baldly that it had been given.)

Very soon after this meeting in Manchester I went to live in London, and called on Harris in Chancery Lane. He was running a curious illustrated weekly, entitled *Hearth and Home*, and I remember sitting in a little back room in his office turning over the files of his magazine and wondering what on earth he hoped to do with such a production. It was tame; it was watery; it was feeble. I looked at him quizzically.

"What do you think of it?" he asked.

"Well, don't you see. . . ." I began hesitatingly; "don't you see that . . . well, now, look at the title!"

"Title's good enough, don't you think?"

"Oh yes, good enough . . . good enough for Fleetway House. Why not sell it to Northcliffe? But you've got no Aunt Maggie's column, and no Beauty Hints, and no Cupid's Corner! Oh, Harris!"

He laughed, and invited me out to lunch.

I never discovered what strange circumstances had conspired to make him the possessor of this extraordinary production. No doubt he bought it for nothing, with the intention of rapidly improving it and selling it for something substantial later on. But I believe it died soon after—perhaps urged on to its grave by some verses of mine which were printed close to an advertisement of ladies'—.

On our way out of the office we were joined by a very beautiful lady who, it soon transpired, shared my admiration for Harris's genius. We jumped on to a bus running at full speed and alighted, a

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couple of minutes later, at Simpson's.

Harris should write a book on cookery. Perhaps he will. Harris should run a hotel. But he has already done so. Harris should be induced to print all the indiscreet things he says over coffee and liqueurs. . . .

It was a close study of Simpson's menu that started the cookery discussion. The Beautiful Lady and I were told what was wrong and what was right with the menu. And then began a discourse, profound, full of strange knowledge and recondite wisdom, a discourse that Balzac should have heard, that the de Goncourts would have envied. We listened, amazed. And a waiter, having rushed to our table in the stress of his work, stood anchored, his mouth slightly open, his whole attention riveted on the Master from whom no gastronomic secrets were hid. Truly, Harris was amazing!

After a considerable time his enthusiasm evaporated and we began to eat. And then ensued a long talk, full of indiscretions, of most enjoyable malice. Harris told us many things that, perhaps, it would have been wiser if he had kept to himself. But, in spite of his venom, his real hatred of certain individuals, he never for a moment permits himself to be blinded to the quality of a man's work.

"So-and-so is the most detestable person," he said, speaking of a well-known writer, "but he is one of the few real poets alive." Again: "X is the most generous-hearted man I have ever met; it's a pity he can't learn to write."

Mention of Richard Middleton, who had only recently died by his own hand in Brussels, troubled him, and it was clear that he had not yet recovered from the shock of this tragedy.

"He killed himself in a mood of sheer disgust—disgust at his lack of success. True, he was still young, and was becoming more widely known month by month; also, he had many friends. Nevertheless, life did not give him what he asked and, tired of asking, he ended life. I remember him coming to me just before he left England. He wanted to get away. Some mood of loathing had come to him; he was fretful, yet determined. I offered him my villa at Nice; it was empty, the caretaker would attend to his wants and he would have ample leisure for his work. He hesitated, stayed in London a day or two longer and then disappeared to Brussels. . . . I know the poison he used, and a score of times I have gone over in my mind the tortures he must have endured."

Harris paled; his face twitched and, involuntarily, as it seemed, his shoulders twisted themselves. Brooding, he was silent for a few minutes, and then, collecting himself with a little shudder, began to speak of other things.

A little later the Beautiful Lady departed and we were left alone.

"And now," said Harris, "tell me about yourself. What are you doing? Why have you left Manchester?—but there is no reason to ask that. Tell me this—are you making enough money for yourself?"

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"Well, I've lived in London just one week," said I, "and my tastes are rather expensive. Just before I left Manchester a very experienced journalist told me I should be making a thousand pounds a year at the end of eighteen months; another, equally experienced, declared I should never make more than six pounds a week. I hope the second one won't prove correct."

He mused for a few moments.

"You ought to make a thousand pounds a year pretty easily, I should think," he said at length. "Whom do you know?"

I knew nobody, and said so. He thereupon took a piece of paper from his pocket and wrote a list of names; at the top of the list stood J. L. Garvin; at the bottom Lord Northcliffe.

"Northcliffe's away," he said, "buying forests in Newfoundland to make paper with. However, he'll be back in a week or two, and in the meantime I'll write you a letter to give to him. And now we'll take a taxi and see people."

Harris gave up the whole of that day to me and, largely owing to him, I had within the next few days more work offered to me than I could possibly get through. From time to time, months later, good things would come my way, and nearly always I could trace them to something generous and fine that Harris had said for me.

It was chiefly because he was so generous with his time that I so rarely called upon him. Often I would curb a strong desire to see him, feeling that however embarrassing my visit might be, he would, out of a quixotic kindness, throw up his work and come with me to talk. For this reason I had not seen him for some little time, when, one morning, I received a letter from him reproaching me for my absence. "Why have you hidden yourself for so long?" he asked. "I go to the Café every night; come, you will find me there."

"The Café," of course, was the Café Royal. It so chanced that, that very afternoon, my duties took me to a symphony concert in the Queen's Hall; the concert over, I found myself passing the Café Royal on my way from the Queen's Hall to Piccadilly Circus, and turned in on the remote chance of finding Harris.

At the end of the passage, near the windows where French papers are displayed, I found a crowd of a dozen excited men, all talking and gesticulating. The rest of the Café was empty, as one would expect at that time of the day. In the middle of the small crowd was Harris, who caught my eye almost at once. He came to me, and I saw that he was rather agitated.

"Come and sit over here, Cumberland," he said. "I've just been through a beastly quarter of an hour."

It appeared that a well-known and very distinguished *littérateur* had quarrelled with him in the Café. . . . Blows had been exchanged. . . .

We talked of money—an ever-absorbing topic both to Harris and to me. He told me his books had brought him practically nothing. For

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The Bomb, if I remember correctly, he received fifty pounds—certainly not more than one hundred pounds.

“If I had been compelled to live by what my books have brought me,” he said, “I should have starved. Yet it is not long ago that Arnold Bennett assured me that I should be able to earn five thousand pounds a year if I gave my whole time to fiction. But Bennett is wrong. My books, ever since *Elder Conklin* was published, have been enthusiastically praised, but they have not had large sales. Most authors must find book-writing the most unremunerative work in the world. I put an enormous amount of labour into *The Bomb*, as I do into all my books, and the labour was not made any the less from the fact that much of the earliest part of the book is autobiographical. In my young manhood I worked as a labourer, deep under water, at the foundations of Brooklyn Bridge; it is all described in my book.”

Though I went to the Café Royal at frequent intervals after that I very rarely saw Harris there. He had abandoned *Hearth and Home*, or it had abandoned him, and he was now throwing away his brilliant gifts on *Modern Society*. I was elected an honorary member of the Cabaret Club, run by Madame Strindberg, the widow of the great Swedish writer, and I used to look in there occasionally in the early hours of the morning, expecting to run across Harris, who, I heard, also visited the exotic, underground and rather riotous place. But I never chanced to see him, and two or three months must have passed without my hearing of him.

In March, 1914, I went to Athens for a holiday. Something brave and wonderful in that city, some ancient Bacchic madness, some fierce exaltation of soul took hold of me, and I remember sitting down one night, after a visit to fever-stricken Eleusis, to write to Harris, feeling the necessity of expressing myself to one who would understand. The reader may be amused that I should think Harris akin to ancient Greece, but if the reader is amused he does not know. Harris. Only A. R. Orage is more Greek in spirit than he is. In reply Harris wrote at great length, full of the fervour of a young student. He told me that in his young manhood he had spent a year of study in that wonderful city, and urged me to visit him on my return to England.

But I was destined not to see him again. Very soon after my return to England he got into trouble with reference to something libellous that he had published in *Modern Society*. He was kept in prison, if I remember rightly, for about a month. I sought permission to visit him there, but was refused, and I was staying in Oxford when he was released.

Soon after the war broke out he wrote me the following letter from Paris:—

23, Avenue Du Bois De Boulogne, Paris, 29th Aug. '14.

My dear Cumberland,—I'm just back from the frontier. . . . This

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war of nations is going to test every man as by fire before it's over. It will be long in spite of Mr Kipps and Bernard Shaw. The Russian masses will hardly come decisively into action (they have scarcely any railways and no good roads) till next May or June, and long before then, or rather in a couple of months from now, the French will be pressed back to within twenty miles of besieged Paris, when I hope the English forces on the flank will stop the German advance. Then will begin the slow process of driving the Germans home, which will be quickened by the Russian weight behind Cossack pricks. Fancy one *man* having the power to set 400 millions of men fighting for their lives. And then they talk of man as a rational animal!!

Don't say you like what I wrote in *The Daily Sketch*; all my best things were carefully cut out and filled up with drivel, till my cheeks burned.

Your sketch of me is very kindly; the fault you find in me is not a fault. Jesus, Shakespeare, Napoleon—all the greatest men have known their own value and insisted on it—perhaps because they have all *come to their own and their own received them not*. When you have done great work you feel it is not yours, but given to you; you are only a reed shaken in the wind; you can judge it as if it had nothing to do with you. Moreover, you see that this failure to recognize greatness is the capital sin of all time, the sin against the Holy Ghost which He said could never be forgiven. Modesty is the fig-leaf of mediocrity—don't let us talk of it. Remember how Whistler scourged it.

I'm writing now on *Natural Religion*—my best thing yet: I've done more than Nietzsche: don't think I'm bragging. I am the Reconciler; though my cocked nose and keen eyes may make you think me a combatant. Twenty years hence, Cumberland, if your eyes keep their promise, you'll think differently of me. I remember as a young man getting Wagner to praise himself and saying to myself that no man was ever so conceited as the little hawk-faced fellow with the plough-share chin. Did he not say that the step from Bach to Beethoven was not so great as that from Beethoven to Wagner! And yet for these fifteen years past I have agreed with him and find nothing conceited in the declaration. Only weak men are hurt by another man's conceit; are we not gods also to be spoken of with reverence?

To see the world in a grain of sand
And Heaven in a wild flower,
To hold Infinity in your hand
And Eternity in an hour.

The question for you is, have I quickened you? Encouraged you to be a brave soldier in the Liberation War of Humanity? Did virtue come out of me? or discouragement? Now at nearly sixty I am about to rebuild my life: my own people have stoned and imprisoned and exiled me. Well—the world's wide. In October I shall be in New York, ready for another round with Fate. Meanwhile, all luck to you

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and all good will from your friend,

Frank Harris.

Remember this word of Joubert: there is no such sure sign of mediocrity as constant moderation in praise. Ha! Ha! Ha! Yours ever,
F. H.

There is not in this letter a single word to indicate that he was not, heart and soul, in sympathy with the Allied Cause. Late in September, 1914, I was myself in Paris, having visited Amiens and the Marne. I took the earliest opportunity of calling upon Harris, but discovered that he had left his rooms a few days earlier, leaving no indication of his next resting-place. On calling upon the American Counsel I discovered that my friend had already sailed for the States.

Subsequently he wrote bitterly about England in an American paper. I never had an opportunity of reading his articles, but I read various extracts from them in British newspapers, and was astounded both by the views they contained and by the manner in which those views were expressed.

Years ago Ruskin wrote Rossetti a curious letter: he said he could regard no man as friend who did not value his (Ruskin's) gifts as highly as he (Ruskin) did. Harris, no doubt, adopted the same kind of attitude towards England. England refused to accept him at his own estimate and, at length, in fierce disgust, Harris turned his back on a country which he deemed unworthy of him.

Gerald Cumberland.

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A Daughter of Eve

AN old-fashioned square house on Long Island, set in a clearing of pine trees: a break in the cliff shows a little triangle of sandy beach and the waters of the sound dancing in the moonlight. Half a dozen men are sitting about on the stoop looking over the silvery waters.

The evening papers had published an account of Mrs. Amory's will which showed that she had left half a million dollars to a nursing home for mill-children in Philadelphia. The news set us all talking of the wonderful work she had done and her self-sacrifice. Most of us assumed that it was a religious motive that had induced this rich and, it was said, handsome woman to give years of her life to improving the lot of the city's waifs and strays.

The ladies had left us and gone up to bed; but we still discussed the matter. Suddenly Charlie Railton turned to Judge Barnett of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, who sat with his chair tilted back against the wall ruminating.

"Say, Judge, what do you think of it anyway? I'd like to hear your opinion."

"I have no opinion on the matter," replied the Judge, taking the cigar out of his mouth and speaking very slowly, "I don't know women well enough to be sure about anything where they're concerned."

"Plead guilty, Judge," cried Railton, who was about thirty years of age. "plead guilty and throw yourself on the mercy of the Court: I guess you know women better than most of us, and they're pretty easy to know, it seems to me."

"I used to think so, too," said the Judge; "but I got kind o' puzzled once and I've never been sure since."

"How was that, Judge?" cried our host, one of the boldest speculators on the New York Stock Exchange, scenting a mystery.

"It's a long story," said Barnett deliberately, "and it's pretty late already."

We all protested and called for the story and the Judge began:

"It takes one a long way back, I'm afraid; back to the late sixties, and it's autobiographical, too: I guess it has every fault."

"Go on," we cried in chorus.

After being admitted to the Bar—he resumed—I went up to my mother's place in Maine, to rest. Along in the winter I got pneumonia on a shooting-trip and could not shake it off. I crawled through the summer and then made up my mind to go to California or somewhere warm for the winter; I had had enough of snow and blizzards. I spent the Winter in Santa Barbara and got as fit as a young terrier.

In the spring I went to 'Frisco and there in a gymnasium and boxing saloon got to know a man who was about the best athlete I ever struck. Winterstein might have been heavyweight champion if he had trained, and he was handsome enough for a stage lover. He was just under six feet in height, with bold expression and good features; dark

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hair in little curls all over his head and agate-dark eyes which grew black when he was excited or angry.

I found he was a better man physically than I was, and that was the beginning of our friendship; we soon became intimate and he told me all about his early life. He was born in the North of England, and became a sailor in the English navy, but he could not stand the rigid discipline, poor food, and harsh treatment. He deserted in Quebec while still a lad, and made his way to New York. He had not had much education, but he had improved what he had by reading. Like most men of intelligence who have not had a college training, he set great store by books and book learning, and got me to help him with mathematics. He had a captain's certificate, it appeared, but he wanted to know navigation thoroughly; he surprised me one day by telling me he owned a little vessel which was nearly ready for sea.

"I have just had her overhauled," he said; "would you like to come and see her? She's lying off Meiggs's."

"What do you do with her?" I questioned, full of curiosity.

"I go pearling," he said; "pearls are found nearly all round the Gulf of California. The fisher-folk rake in the oysters and lay them on the beach till they get bad and open of themselves. The children collect the pearls and keep them until I come round. I paid for the craft and have a couple of thousand dollars put by from last year's work."

"But where did you learn about pearls?" I asked.

"I worked for a man once and picked it up. Sometimes I make a little mistake, but not often. You see we go to out-of-the-way places where we reckon to give about a quarter what the pearls are worth. That leaves a wide margin for mistakes."

"But I had no idea that there were pearls in the Gulf," I said.

"Why not come along and see for yourself," he said. "I'll be starting in a week. The schooner had to have her bottom cleaned and the copper repaired, that's what's hung me up for this last month or so. Now I'm about right for another year. If you'd like to come, I'd be glad to have you."

"And make me mate?" I asked laughing.

"Commander," he replied seriously, "and you shall have ten per cent of the profits."

"I'll think it over and let you know," was my answer.

The adventure tempted me, the strange life and work, the novelty of the thing: I resolved to go pearling.

I went with Winterstein to the wharf and he showed his craft to me. She looked like a toy vessel, a little schooner, a fifty-footer of about forty tons. She sat on the water like a duck, a little New England model with beautiful lines. Winterstein introduced me to his first mate, Donkin, and his second mate, Crawford. Donkin was a big lump of a fellow, six feet two in height, broad in proportion and brawny, a good seaman. Crawford I soon found out was an even better sailor and more intelligent, though of only average strength.

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"What about the crew?" I asked Winterstein when we were alone in the little cabin.

"I want one more man and a boy," he replied laughing at my surprised face.

"But," I retorted, "you can't have three officers and one man." "It's like this," he said: "Donkin has only been a second mate, but he gets a first mate's certificate provided he stays with me a year, and the same thing with Crawford. The work is not hard," he added apologetically, "they get good wages and a lift in rank and it suits then, and so I get first-rate work cheap. Four or five men can manage this craft easy so long as we don't strike a cyclone and there ain't much dirty weather in the Gulf."

A couple of days later Winterstein told me shyly that he had been married recently, and after I had congratulated him, he insisted that I must come and be introduced to the prettiest girl in California. All the way uptown he praised his young wife, and the praise I found was not extravagant. Mrs. Winterstein was charming: tall and fair with Irish gray eyes; her shyness and love of Winterstein put a sort of aureole about her. She was of Irish parentage: before her marriage her name had been Rose O'Connor. Nothing would do but I must call her Rose at once. The pair lived in a little frame house on the side of the bluff, where now there is a famous park. An old Irishwoman did the chores for Rose and mothered and scolded her just as she had done before her marriage. Rose, I learned, had been a teacher in the High School. In the next few days I saw a good deal of her. She was doing up her quarters and buying knick-knacks for the cabin and tiny stateroom, and I naturally ran her errands and tried to save her trouble.

Whenever I ventured a shy compliment she always told me I must see her sister Daisy, who was at Sacramento in a finishing school. Daisy was lovely and Daisy was clever; there was no one like Daisy in her sister's eyes.

* * *

It was a perfect June morning with just air enough to make the sun dance on the ripples, when at length we were all ready on board and starting out of the bay.

Our crew had been completed by a young darky called Abraham Lincoln, who at once took over the cooking, and a sailor called Dyer, who was a little lame, but handy enough at his work.

The first part of the cruise was uneventful: it might have been a yachting trip. Day after day we sailed along in delightful Sunshine, with a six- or eight-knot-breeze. The perfect conditions would have been monotonous had we not amused ourselves with fishing. One day I remember we got rather rough weather and when Winterstein, Donkin and myself took our bearing next day we found that we had

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been swept some distance to the westward.

It was Crawford who solved the enigma for us. He told us there was a current called the West Wind Drift, which set across the Pacific from East to West as if making for 'Frisco and then flows down the coast from North to South till it meets the North Equatorial current which comes from the South and sweeps out to the West, carrying the tail end, so to speak, of the Drift with it. Where the two opposing currents meet off the South Californian coast, one often finds a heavy sea and variable crosswinds. But as soon as we turned into the Gulf the fine weather began again.

The trading which I had hoped would be full of adventure turned out to be quite simple and tame. We ran along the shore, stopping wherever there was a village. Usually we dropped anchor pretty close in and rowed ashore. At nine places out of ten Winterstein was known. The fishermen brought out their little cotton-bags of pearls and we bought them. Curiously enough, the black pearl, so esteemed to-day, had then no value at all. Whenever we bought a packet of white pearls, the black ones were thrown in as not worth estimating. The pink pearls, too, had no price, unless they were exceptionally large or beautifully shaped, and even then they were very cheap. I began to collect the black pearls to make a necklace for Mrs. Winterstein. I was half in love with her I think from the beginning. She was not only very pretty but laughter-loving, and girlish, and her little matronly airs sat drolly upon her. Everyone on board liked her, I don't know why. I suppose she wanted to please us all, for she was full of consideration for everyone. I have never seen any woman who appealed so unconsciously and so directly to the heart, and her happiness was something that had to be seen to be believed. She simply adored her husband, waited on him hand and foot, and pampered all his little selfishnesses. She was only unhappy when away from him, or when it was rough weather and she was sea-sick. Curiously enough, in spite of the long cruise, she never became a good sailor. In fine weather she was all right, but the moment *The Rose* commenced to bob about, Mrs. Winterstein used to retire to her cabin.

I told no one about the necklace. I simply annexed all the black pearls and determined to get them strung together as soon as we got back to 'Frisco. I never landed without asking after them, and even went so far as to buy some which were being used by the native children as trinkets. I remember once coming across an extraordinary specimen as big as a marble, perfectly round, and with a perfect skin. We were passing a cabin where a couple of mestizo girls of fourteen and sixteen were seated on the sand playing a game of bones, which I think must be as old as the world, for the Greeks knew it as astragalos. You-throw the round bones up into the air and turn your hand round quickly and catch them on the back. Among the five bones was a black pearl, which I admired at once and bought for a quarter, I think. I can still see the half-naked girl-child as she handed it to me.

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She stood on one leg like a stork, and with her right foot rubbed her left ankle, while glancing at me half-shyly out of great liquid dark eyes. She had only a red calico wrap about her body, out of the folds of which one small round amber breast showed: but she was evidently unconscious of her nudity—a child in mind, a woman in body.

I have absolutely nothing interesting to tell of this first cruise. We stopped once where the sea must have receded from the land, for the town was some four miles inland. I have forgotten the name of the place, but it was quite a town—some two or three thousand inhabitants. The smell of the oysters on the sea beach, I remember, was overpowering. Thousands and thousands of bushels had been left to rot. Our harvest of pearls here was so large that Winterstein resolved to go back to 'Frisco at once and market his goods. We were all tired of fish and biscuits, varied with sow-belly fiery with salt and black with age.

The return trip was just as uneventful as the voyage out. Winterstein's profits were beyond all his former experiences. After paying all expenses, giving me my tenth, and dividing another tenth between the two mates, he cleared up something like six thousand dollars for two month's work.

He was naturally eager to get to sea again, but there was a difficulty. Rose found that her sister had left Sacramento, and had come to live in 'Frisco. She had got work, too, I gathered, in a shop and refused absolutely to be a schoolgirl any longer or to accept her sister's advice. Rose was anxious about her and resolved to take her on board with us the next cruise. But for a long time Miss Daisy refused to come: she preferred, it appeared, to be entirely on her own and it was only when Winterstein joined Rose in solicitation that she finally consented. I was rather eager to see this very self-willed and independent young lady.

I was quite ready for another trip. It would please my mother, I thought, if I went back with a couple of thousand dollars in my pocket, and I had got my black pearls strung as a necklace for Rose.

Winterstein warned me that the next trip would perhaps not be so profitable, as he would leave out the chief places, which he had already touched at, and go to the more remote stations.

"Pearling," he said, "is like everything else in life—the easiest work is the best paid." His philosophy was not very deep though his observation was exact enough.

We arranged to start one afternoon. I had been in town making purchases. It was wretched weather. A Nor'easter had sprung up and blew sand through the streets in clouds. I only hoped that the departure would be postponed. I found Winterstein waiting impatiently for me, and his wife's sister, too, was on deck in spite of the rough weather. Winterstein introduced me to her. Daisy O'Connor did not make much impression on me at first; she was girlish-young and did not seem to be anything like so good-looking as her sister. True, she

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had large dark-brown eyes and good features, but she was smaller than Rose, and without Rose's brilliant coloring or charm of appeal. She treated me rather coolly, I thought. Winterstein seemed to be in a great hurry to get off.

"Why not put off going till to-morrow?" I asked. "As soon as we get outside she'll duck into it halfway up her jib."

"To-morrow's Friday," remarked Miss Daisy.

"Surely you're not superstitious?" I laughed.

"Yes, I am," replied the girl, and a peculiar character of decision came into her face and voice.

"You know the old rhyme?"

She questioned me with a look, and I repeated the old chanty:

Monday for health
And Tuesday for wealth
And Wednesday the best day of all,
Thursday for losses.
And Friday for crosses
And Saturday no day at all . . .

"Thursday will be a bad start," I added.

"I like a bad start," she retorted; "a good start often means a bad ending." She spoke bitterly, I thought.

"A resolute little thing," I said to myself carelessly, while getting into my sea-togs.

In five minutes the anchor was up and the sails set and we were beating out to sea in the teeth of the gale. In the bay the wind came in gusts, but as we held towards Lime Point it settled down to a steady drive which heeled us over till the lee scuppers were under water. Every moment it blew harder. When we went about and opened out the Golden Gate, *The Rose* went over, over till it looked as if she would turn turtle. I laid hold of the main rigging to keep my feet and get the spindrift out of my eyes. Ten feet from me was the girl with one hand on a stay, her slight figure braced against the gale, evidently enjoying the experience. A different voyage from the first, I thought to myself, and under different auspices. But the work and danger stopped thought. As soon as we were out of the Golden Gate and clear of Point Bonita the sea began to pile up and break in masses on the bar. We were in for a dirty night. In five minutes we were all wet to the skin. The girl had gone below. The companion, skylights and hatches were all battened down and made snug and not a moment too soon. The sea on the bar was terrific: again and again the green water buried the decks, but as soon as we had got outside and turned her bows southward, the gale came fair on the quarter and the little "saucer" as I called *The Rose* made good weather of it, lifting easily to the great combers and swooping along their shoulders into the night, for all the world like some white sea-bird.

The coming on board of Daisy O'Connor altered everything. I

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was too young at the time to explain, or even understand what was taking place. The interest which used to center in Rose and Winterstein and abaft the companion, now followed Daisy all over the ship. For the girl was never long in one place and divided her favors impartially among all the men on board. Now she walked his watch talking to Crawford, or sat discussing a book with me. She was less with Winterstein than with any of us, which was not remarked, because the weather still continued boisterous and gave him a good deal to do between the stateroom in which his wife spent most of her time and the wave-swept deck.

In every way this cruise was different from the first, less pleasant, if more exciting. The first thing I noticed was that Donkin, who appeared to like Winterstein on the first voyage, now disliked him. Winterstein spoke sharply to him one day about the way the jib was sitting:

"That jib's shivering," he said, "it's not set flat, take a pull at it."

Donkin looked at him and said sulkily:

"That's because she's steered too free."

"That's all you know about it," replied Winterstein cheerfully, "at any rate take a pull at the sheet."

The look of contempt and anger which Donkin threw at the skipper surprised and shocked me. I did not even then notice that Daisy was standing to windward almost between them. It only occurred to me long afterwards. *The Rose*, which had been the most comfortable craft in the world, had become an ordinary sort of vessel.

The weather was very unsettled; usually we had more than enough wind and a heavy lop of sea, and the little saucer, tossed about like a cork.

Three days out of four Rose O'Connor kept to her berth, and never showed at all even at meal times, and Daisy O'Connor took her place on the deck and in the cabin as well. Day after day Winterstein and I lunched with her alone. The door leading into Rose's stateroom was generally closed. It was impossible not to be interested in Daisy. She was very intelligent and self-centered, and as reserved as Rose was ingenuous and open. She struck me as being much older than Rose. She was a sort of enigma, and I could not help wanting to find the key to it. She never praised or complimented one as Rose did; her praise was a word or two, which seemed wrung from her, a tantalizing, proud creature.

One day we were running along under some bluffs; the wind was light and fitful; we had all the plain sails set. Rose was on deck, seated in a cane arm-chair to windward of the companion. Winterstein was a consummate seaman, and that day seemed a little anxious; he kept running down to look at the barometer, and had a word or two with Crawford, I remembered-afterwards. Neither of them seemed to like the look of the weather. I paid small attention to externals, for Daisy was walking the deck with me, and I was telling her how I intended to put up my shingle in New York that winter and start my law office.

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She was looking her very best and I had begun to wonder whether she was not even more attractive than her sister. When she got excited or when the wind blew a little sharply, her white skin would take on the faint pink tinge of a sea-shell, and when interested her eyes would grow large and deepen in color. Altogether I was beginning to think her fascinating. Unconsciously I was transferring to her my old allegiance to Rose. Rose was not at her best this cruise; she looked washed out and pale; she did what she could, but the bad weather was against her. Clearly the spiritual center of gravity, so to speak, of the vessel, had changed, and I certainly was not blind to the fact that Daisy gave me more of her time than she gave to anyone else, though she would often have long talks with Donkin. The person she spent least time with was distinctly Winterstein.

While we were walking up and down talking, the wind suddenly ceased, and the little craft shot up at once on an even keel and set Rose's chair sliding. It was stopped by Winterstein, who took his wife below, and as we resumed our walk again I noticed that the look Daisy threw at her sister was more than indifferent; there was contempt in it. In a minute or two Winterstein came up again and stood near the main sheet and every now and then we passed him. The wind was blowing again steadily, and the schooner heeled over under it and all went on as before. Suddenly, without any warning, the wind veered round and blew from almost the opposite point of the compass. With a slash and crash the sails came flapping over our heads and the boom smashed inboard, as if we were going to gibe. I caught the companion to hold myself. Daisy was thrown past me and would have had a nasty fall, had not Winterstein caught her in his arms. She tore herself loose angrily, and he sprang to the mainsheet and drew it taut and stopped the boom from going over. The helmsman, Crawford, had been almost as quick. No sooner had the squall struck us than he put the helm up and the next moment *The Rose's* bow fell off and her sails filled again and she went on as before. In the nick of time Winterstein eased away the mainsail.

The fine thing in the occurrence was Winterstein's extraordinary speed and strength. There he stood holding the mainsheet, his magnificent athlete's figure etched against the sky. Before I had taken in his splendid unconscious pose, Daisy made an inarticulate exclamation as if she had caught her breath; but when I looked at her, her face was as composed as usual and without expression.

I thought at the time that the weather was chiefly responsible for the change in the moral atmosphere. It is impossible to be good-tempered if you are wet through by day and up half the night shortening sail or ready to shorten it. For the schooner after all was only a small craft, and heavily sparred even for summer weather. The sails, it was evident, were too big for her, though Winterstein declared he had never seen such weather in September. I had never had harder work. Three days out of the four we worked all day long and half through

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the night. The little craft was undermanned. And though we were all strong, five or six pairs of hands cannot do the work of ten or twelve, and no man can be in two places at once. Our tempers began to get ragged.

On the first trip Crawford had been a great friend of mine; he was really a fine sailor and intelligent besides, and whenever I wanted to know anything, I used to go and talk with him, and even in 'Frisco I took him out with me to the theatre once or twice, and was very much amused by his shrewd comments. But one day he called me to help him hauling in the jib.

"Bear a hand, damn you," he cried. I was amazed.

"What's the matter, Crawford?" I said afterward, but he turned on his heel and muttered something about "lazy" in such a tone that I replied:

"Lazy or not, you had better curse someone else."

But afterwards, in cool blood, I could not help asking myself what it all meant. I could find no reason for Crawford's change of manner. "Lazy" stuck in my mind. The day before had been fine and I had sat in a chair near Daisy, and read Whittier to her, but that could have nothing to do with Crawford I decided, who seemed to me quite old: he must have been nearly forty.

The weather made little difference to Daisy. She was up on deck in all weathers, and seemed fairly to revel in a hard gale. When it was dry she used to wear a tight-knitted thing, like a long blue jersey, which outlined her slight figure, and when it was wet she would put on a waterproof, and tuck her hair inside a close hood, which seemed to frame her face lovingly; I liked her best when it simply blew hard, and we could walk about and talk.

About this time I began to notice that Donkin was trying in his uncouth way to make up to her. He seized every opportunity of talking to her and advising her. It was a remark of Crawford's that opened my eyes. They were standing together chatting one day when Crawford looked at me over his shoulder and said:

"She does not care for him any more than she cares for the mainmast, but the big fool thinks she does."

A pang of surprise and anger told me that I cared more than I admitted to myself. The idea of Donkin, great, ugly, sullen Donkin, side by side with that beauty and fine intelligence.

"Beauty and the beast," I said. Crawford looked at me and turned aside: I realized that I had spoken bitterly.

All this time there seemed to be less change in Winterstein than in any of the rest of us. Day after day and night after night he did two or three men's work, and did not seem to feel fatigue or need sleep. He was helped, of course, by his magnificent health and strength. He appeared to take it as a matter of course that I should monopolize Daisy, and we talked together at meal times almost as if he were not in the cabin. Our talk was mostly of books and works of art in which

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it was impossible for him to join. He listened indeed, but could hardly expect to interest her in books as I could. Sometimes I read scraps of Shelley or Swinburne to her, and it was a treat to see her face flush and change with the varying emotions. Her eyes were extraordinary; they drew the very soul out of one and tempted one perpetually to more passionate expression. Talks begun in the cabin continued with us on deck. No one made me talk as she did. She was something more than a sympathetic listener. She made one want to draw forth her interest or rare word of praise. But if she showed intense emotion about a piece of verse or some wonderful cloud-effect, her interest was always impersonal. As soon as the talk became at all sentimental she would break it off and her eyes would grow inexpressive as brown stones.

After we had rounded the peninsula and turned into the Gulf, the weather suddenly improved. Day after day we floated along with a light breeze under a pale-blue sky, tremulous with excess of light. Day after day now Rose came up and we had tea and even dinner on deck. But somehow or other Rose never regained her position: we liked her and turned to her, attracted by her smiling good humor, but the spiritual interest of the ship was centered in her sister. Everything in Rose was open, comprehensible, from her flowerlike beauty to her manifest devotion to Winterstein, but Daisy was a closed book, a tantalizing puzzle; for all of us she had the charm of the unknown and unexplored. She entered into no direct competition with her sister; she simply kept apart as a rival queen and there could be no doubt that her court was better attended. You flattered Rose and paid compliments to her, the other you studied and sought to interest. Rose was always more than fair to her sister. In fact she praised her and made up to her timidly, like the rest of us. One day Winterstein had gone down for a pair of loose boots for his wife, as she wanted to walk. While he put the boots on we naturally talked of feet. I praised Rose's feet, but she would not have it:

"My feet are huge," she said, "in comparison to Daisy's. I take fours and she takes ones, don't you, Daisy? Show them."

Daisy looked at her with a little smile, but did not follow her advice.

"Come, Daisy, show us," I said.

She turned smiling inscrutable eyes on me and that was all. Suddenly Winterstein laughed.

"Daisy wants to spare us," he said. Her face hardened.

"Daisy does not think it a matter of any moment," she said, "but if you are all agreed, there you are," and she pulled her feet together and drew up her skirts deliberately, showing tiny feet and two nervous, slight ankles. But almost at the same moment she sprang to her feet:

"Are you coming?" she threw to me, and walked down the deck.

"What wonderful feet you have," I said, "almost too small for your figure."

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"Why should very small feet and hands be admired?" she said, turning to me.

I could not give her the answer that came into my mind, and hesitated, seeking some other explanation.

"It's traditional. . . . I hardly know," I hesitated and sprang to knowledge for evasion. "All Greek statues of women have large feet," I remarked.

"But there must be a reason," she said, and her eyes probed mine.

"Yes," I replied, feeling annoyed with myself for getting red. She took it all in coolly and then changed the conversation, perhaps she understood more than she admitted.

In the Gulf we called at various small stations and did fairly well with the pearls. Rose had given Daisy my black pearl necklace, I noticed: it seemed strange to me that all the affection should be on Rose's side.

The weather got finer and finer: it became so hot indeed that Winterstein fixed up an awning from the companion to the poop. We used to keep the awning cool by throwing a couple of buckets of water on it before Rose came on deck, for she felt the heat intensely.

About this time I began to guess that her paleness and languor had a cause, and we all felt more kindly towards her if that were possible. But the fact itself seemed to set her more and more apart, putting her outside our circle. The heat seemed to affect Daisy no more than it affected the rest of us. I used to get up nearly every morning and bathe, and when there was a wind Donkin or Crawford used to throw a bucket of water over me and I hopped about on the forecastle to dry myself. If there was no wind I went overboard, keeping near the vessel because of the sharks. One day I had just run up after my bath, I was still drying my head, when Daisy came on deck.

"Oh, how I should like a swim," she said. "I've been so hot in that stewy cabin."

She did not look hot, she was always the picture of neatness. But Donkin put his oar in at once.

"Nothing easier, Miss Daisy."

When had he commenced calling her by her Christian name, I wondered angrily.

"Oh, but the sharks," she said. "If one were to bite a foot off, or a hand, I should kill myself. I do not mind death, but I would not be deformed for anything."

"We could rig a sail out on the yard, so that you could have four feet of water, and yet be perfectly safe," he replied.

"Oh, how splendid," she said, "I wish you would."

"In ten minutes, Miss Daisy," he said, and turned away to the work, Crawford following at his heels.

"I must go down and get ready," she said, "but won't you come in with me, you won't mind bathing again, it will give me courage?"

"I have no bathing things," I said, "but I can probably get a suit

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ready for to-morrow.”

“What a pity,” she pouted, “bathing alone is no fun. Can’t you make something do?”

“I daresay I can,” I replied.

“Please,” and she disappeared down the companion.

I went below and got myself ready with a loose flannel shirt, and a pair of duck trousers cut off at the knee, promising myself to hem them round next day. The rummaging about took me some time, and when I came on deck Daisy was already waiting and all the preparations had been made. A yard had been sheered out from the ship and stayed against the bulwark and companion. From the end of it a square sail had been let down by a cross yard at the end of the spar. The sail dipped into the water and formed a bath of perhaps twenty feet long, fifteen feet broad and four or five in depth. The gangway opened into the middle of it, and the little ladder led down to the water’s edge. When I came up, Daisy was thanking them.

“Did you ever see such a perfect bath?” she said, turning to me. “Isn’t it clever of them. I think you sailors,” and she looked into Donkin’s eyes, “can just do anything.” (The fellow’s weatherbeaten hide flushed to brick-red.) “It was Mr. Crawford,” she added, “who thought of putting the sail by the gangway. He thinks of everything.”

She was diabolically clever; for the praise was deserved. Crawford’s white face paled and he fidgetted under her eyes.

Daisy had on a little green cap, into which she had tucked her hair, and a great white bath sheet. Winterstein came up from below and stood close by.

“Will you go first?” I said.

She turned and undid the tapes at her neck, and let the bath towel slip on to the white deck. She was in pale green with knickerbockers; a little tunic cut low at the neck fell over her hips. Her arms were bare, and her legs from the knees down. Everything suited her. She was adorable—girl and woman in one. The next moment she had slid down the ladder into the sea and was swimming about. In a moment I joined her, and then she explained to me that she could never float.

“My feet always go down,” she said, “and before I know it I am standing on my feet upright in the water.” Again and again she tried to float, but always with the same result. I wondered if she knew how provocative she was, as she lay there with the men leaning down from the bulwarks, all staring at her with hot eyes. When she came on deck she did not disappear at once into the bath cloak, which Donkin held ready for her. She stood there among the men on deck in her semi-nudity, and cried:

“Oh, I have enjoyed myself; it has been perfect. I am so much obliged to you,” she said, turning to Donkin, “and to you, too, Mr. Crawford.”

I noticed that Dyer at the helm devoured her with his eyes while Abraham’s black face grinned from the forecastle hatch.

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"It was kind of all of you," she went on, "the water was not a bit cold. You will put the sail down to-morrow, won't you?" she said to Donkin, as he stretched her arm backwards over her head to get the cloak. The movement threw her little breasts upward into sharp relief; the next moment she had drawn the cloak about her with a little gay laugh and disappeared down the companionway. It was as if the sun had gone out. For a moment we men stared at each other, and then I went forward to change my things while Donkin and Crawford busied themselves getting in the sail. Suddenly I heard Winterstein's voice:

"Here, you Abraham, bear a hand with the swab here and dry up this water. As you've come on deck you may as well do something." I turned in surprise, the tone was strangely hard and menacing, utterly unlike Winterstein, but I did not catch a glimpse of his face, for as soon as he had given the order he turned away to stare at the land over the poop.

What was the meaning of it all, I asked myself, but I soon put the query out of my head, because I did not want to dull the vivid image of the girl's beautiful figure which had been revealed to me. Was anyone else as lovely? I asked myself. Her feet were like baby feet. The marks of sex in her figure were so slight that they merely accentuated the beauty of the slim round outlines. What provocation in the crooked girlish arms, what a challenge in the inscrutable mutinous eyes. She had been delightful to me in the sea: had turned to me familiarly for help; I had touched her firm flesh again and again, and I was intoxicated with her as with wine.

I did not see Daisy again that morning until lunchtime, or dinner as we called it. I had fished persistently and called out loudly whenever I had the opportunity, hoping that it would bring her on deck, for she revelled in fishing, and was easily the champion because all the men vied with each other in picking the most attractive baits for her. In this game Crawford was easily first. He brought up a piece of red flannel one day, cut into the shape of a narrow tongue; on the other side of it he had sewn a glittering piece of white satin. Equipped with this bait no one had a chance with Daisy. She had caught three fish to my one, and as Donkin or Crawford was always at hand to pull up the wet line for her and take the hook from the fish and put the bait straight again she had little to do except amuse herself.

At lunch she took all my compliments in complete silence.

"You would be able to float," I insisted, "if you would arch your back and keep your head right back."

But she would not have it.

"I do arch my back and put my head right back, but my feet pull me upright."

"Such tiny feet," I replied, "have not the power to pull anyone down."

"You shall try, to-morrow," she said. "I will keep as rigid as you

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please, and you shall put your hand under my back to see whether I am stiff."

Winterstein suddenly spoke:

"Why don't you put that French thing on, that knitted thing instead of the tunic?"

"Do you mean the *maillot*?" she said slowly, looking him straight in the eyes.

He nodded. His expression I remembered afterward was a little strained.

"I have not worn it," she said with her eyes on the cloth, "since I bathed at the Cliff House, but as you wish it," she added slowly, "I will put it on," and she turned away indifferently. There was a tension in the air, but not on her side I thought as much as on his, but why?

"What is the *maillot* like?" I said, showing her that I knew the French word.

"It's a knitted thing," she said; "all the girls used to wear them and little French slippers. You know we have parties in the baths. I have got all the things still. I'll put them on to-morrow. I think they suit me. Some people used to say so," she added slowly.

Winterstein got up, and went into his wife's bed-room for something or other. When he returned I was leaving the cabin. Daisy called to me on the way up that she would bring Browning with her. She was sensitive to beauty of words or music and extraordinarily intelligent: I delighted to read her my favorite poems.

If I were a story-teller I'd try to make all you people feel what we felt next morning. The weather was perfect, the sea like glass: the little schooner seemed to breathe gently as if sleeping on the oily swell. Rose came on deck early and established herself under the awning. I thought that her presence would make a difference, would act as a restraint on her sister and I wished her away. I had got my bathing things in some sort of order the evening before. I rather fancied myself in them. I had not been on deck more than five minutes when I noticed a sort of subdued excitement in everyone. All the men were on deck and they had all rigged themselves out more or less. Donkin was shaved and so was Crawford, Dyer limped about in clean ducks, and Abraham Lincoln had mounted a large white collar with a scarlet and blue tie. Winterstein alone had made no change. He talked to his wife while moving about whistling for wind as if indifferent. . . .

For the first time I noticed clearly that Rose was soon to become a mother. Her face was a little white and drawn, and when she tried once or twice to take a few turns with Winterstein you could see that her figure had altered in spite of the loose dress she wore. I was looking over the little lifeboat which we carried on the davit amidship when I heard Daisy's voice.

"What a perfect day," she said, "and how delightful everything looks. I know I shall enjoy the bath."

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Naturally I went towards her. She was standing close to the companion. Rose was sitting a yard or so behind it with her chair against the mahogany top. Everyone was on the tiptoe of excitement. Donkin, Crawford, Abraham Lincoln, all moved like steel nibs toward the magnet, except Winterstein. The girl had her back to the men. Suddenly she opened her wrap a little to show herself in her *maillot* to her sister. Winterstein and I could not help seeing her as well. It caught my breath. For one moment I thought she was naked. The *maillot* was white; the meshes of it showed the rose-colored skin beneath. She looked like an ivory statue by some modern French artist: she was rounder, more woman-like than I had pictured her immaturity.

“Oh, Daisy,” cried Rose.

“He told me to put it on,” said Daisy defiantly looking at Winterstein while drawing the cloak about her again. “You used to say it fitted me perfectly,” she added, “and liked me in it.”

“Yes,” said Rose, amiably, leaning back and closing her eyes, as if in pain or weariness, “it does suit you, but somehow or other it was different when half a dozen of you children were all wearing them in the bath; besides you’ve grown, I suppose, and it’s in the open and men about . . .”

“I’ll take it off,” said Daisy in the hard clear voice which I had come to recognize as a sign of annoyance.

“Oh, no,” said Rose, “I’d bathe in it now I had it on. Go on,” she said smiling, “the dip will do you good.”

The girl turned and without a word went down into the cabin. In a minute or two she appeared.

“Will you go down first,” she said to me, “and I will dive in.” She stood in the gangway with the shapeless wrap about her. I nodded, for my mouth was dry, and without more ado, threw myself into the sea, and in a moment was standing on the sail dashing the water from my eyes. Daisy opened the wrap slowly and took her arms out of the sleeve with a sort of serpentine movement, infinitely graceful and provocative. She had put on her little tunic over the *maillot*. I was glad the outline was draped; but having seen her in the *maillot* the vision of her form was still with me in its half-ripe seduction. But being hidden from the other men it seemed mine and private. Yet I noticed that Donkin received her bathing cloak mechanically without taking his eyes off her. As she stood above me she swayed backward, threw her hands above her head, then bent gradually forward—down, down, the lines of her flexible young body changing every moment and let herself glide into the sea. All the time she stood poised on the deck there was a steel band of hate round my chest. I do not think the girl knew what she was doing. I do not believe she could have imagined the rage of desire her beauty called to life in these men who had been a month at sea, eating heartily while breathing in the tonic sea air. As soon as she was in the water beside me all anger vanished; she seemed

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to belong to me then, and I wondered whether she liked me to touch her; at any rate she was not adverse to learning anything I suggested and naturally I was fertile in suggestions.

Suddenly she said she would float; she would arch her back and put her head back as far as she could, and I must put my hand under her waist and support her, then I would see how impossible it was for her to float. I did what I was told without thinking, and at first she floated and I looked into her face and cried:

"You see, you see." But she was not looking at me, her face was set hard, there was a sort of defiance in it. I followed her glance up and saw Winterstein leaning over the bulwarks gazing down on her. I seemed to catch for the moment a sort of tension between them and then slowly the vaselike outlines of her hips sank lower into the water, and she came up smiling:

"See how my feet drag me down," she said, pushing her right foot up through the water in comic dismay, as if to show me how heavy it was.

Winterstein had left the bulwarks, but Donkin was looking down at her and Crawford and the others all drinking her in with greedy eyes. She swam about a little and then climbed up the ladder and stood at the top of it, half in the hot sunshine, and half in the shade of the awning—to get warm, she said. My foot was on the lower, rung of the ladder, I was so close to her that I could see every line of her body, the adorable roundness, and the fine nervous grace of it. I could scarcely refrain from putting my hands on her as she stood there swaying just in front of me, with the wet tunic clinging to her like skin and showing all her adorable nudities.

"It is too delicious," she said with a little shudder, "the water is warmer than the air. The air makes me shiver, but the water is warm like new milk. You should come and bathe, too, Rose."

"Put on your wrap and change quickly, or you'll catch cold," said Rose, who had picked up her things and was going down to the cabin. She spoke a little tartly, I thought.

The girl turned and let Donkin wrap the bathing cloak about her without a word. I caught sight of her as she turned, and the vision of her is with me still. I've wondered since if there ever was a more perfect figure, or if anyone else could be so slim, with such tiny round breasts no larger than apples. I can still see the dimples in her arms at the elbow and the drips of water diamonding the rosy skin as she lifted up her arms to take the cloak which Donkin was holding.

The next moment she had vanished down the companion. I stepped forward. Donkin and Crawford were standing close together still staring after the girl. As she disappeared they turned and perhaps by accident jostled each other: in a flash their jealous hate flamed. Before one could think Donkin was holding Crawford by the throat while Crawford was striking him in the face savagely. The next moment Winterstein had thrust them apart.

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"Are you mad?" he said to Donkin in repressed low voice. "I'm ashamed of you," he added, turning to Crawford and speaking more naturally. Donkin glowered sullenly while Crawford muttered something and went forward. As I followed him Lincoln's black face went down the forehatchway and Dyer turned to take up his watch again; but not before I had noticed a certain antagonism on every face; they all reminded me of a set of dogs on the point of fighting—all rigid, with bared fangs and hating eyes.

The rest of the day passed in a sort of stupor, Rose was on deck nearly the whole time, Winterstein always in attendance. Daisy and I walked the deck a good while together; I got her to say she liked me, but when I pressed her to say how much, she only laughed and changed the subject. She had a long talk with Donkin and another talk with Crawford; she even managed to smile at Dyer and transport him into the seventh heaven of delight. For the first time I began to realize her insatiate vanity; she wanted all the men to admire her. I raged against her in my heart, raged the more because I was in the toils. I would have given ten years of my life to have been able to have taken that slight figure in my arms, to have crushed those little breasts against mine and kissed the flower of her mouth.

But of all this she seemed unconscious, she was simply herself, quiet, aloof, and inscrutable till late in the afternoon, when a little breeze sprang up, a land breeze which gave the light schooner three or four knots an hour—good steering way. Then she had the lines up and fished from the poop. Donkin and myself waited on her, while Winterstein walked up and down beside his wife from the poop to the companion and from the companion to the poop in silence. Dyer steered and Abraham Lincoln came grinning to us every now and then to bring fresh bait for Miss Daisy. . . .

* * *

The catastrophe came with startling suddenness. I see now that it must have come, that it was all prepared, inevitable. Yet the unexpectedness, the tragic completeness of it were overwhelming. It seems to have blotted out all that went before so that I do not know whether it was two or three days or half a dozen days later than the bathing or not. Anyhow the bathing I have described was the last. For some days after we had lively breezes; the spar had to be taken in and the extemporized bath dismantled. We had called, I remember, at Mulege near Los Coyotes, and had had a good haul of pearls and a lot of hard work.

One afternoon we had been working hard and had had to row the boat for four or five miles over shallow water to a village where the inhabitants, we found, had collected pearls for years and years and had never before been visited. The bargaining was interminable. The fisher-folk had no standard of value. One man wanted a dollar for

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three or four fine pearls, another wanted fifty dollars for an insignificant bad specimen, and we were on the strain of all day bargaining and cajoling. I was tuckered out when I got into the boat and took the bow oar to Donkin's stroke while Winterstein sat in the stern sheets. I think Winterstein, too, must have been tired and exasperated, for he scarcely spoke all the way to the schooner.

When we got on board a six-knot breeze was blowing. After telling us to keep our course, Winterstein went below. I went down, too, and had a sleep: when I came up again I felt refreshed and vigorous.

The night was wonderfully beautiful. The moon rose like a crimson wafer through a thin heat mist, but soon shook herself clear of her trailing garments and walked the purple like a queen. I noticed for the first time that the moon's radiance lent the edges of the nearer clouds a brownish smoky rose tinge. As the night wore on the fleecy round clouds gathered closer together like silver shields hanging heavily against the blue vault; the moonlight grew fitful.

When I went down Daisy and Winterstein were both on deck. They were standing near each other just by the poop. When I came up after having had a cup of coffee and a biscuit they were still talking at intervals. She was sitting on the companion while he stood in front of her or moved away and then came back. I went forward to do something and when I returned they were still talking, which seemed strange to me, for they seldom exchanged more than a word or two. Every now and then she laughed, and the laugh was hard and clear: she was scornful I thought. They seemed so preoccupied that I was annoyed and would not join them. Abraham Lincoln at the tiller was almost out of earshot. I suppose I was jealous. I noticed that when the moon came out from the darkening clouds they were some distance apart, but as soon as the light was veiled they seemed close together again. I was furious, my pride prevented me going near them, yet I could not but stare toward them at intervals, jealously watchful. Suddenly while I was a little to windward, just in line with the helmsman, the moon came out, and I saw Winterstein take Daisy's head quickly in his hands and kiss her on the lips; my heart had stopped. The moon showed everything as if it were daylight. I took a quick step forward when just as suddenly I became aware that Rose had come out of the companion and had seen her husband kissing her sister.

For a moment she stood petrified. I heard a faint exclamation, or was it merely her breath caught in a gasp and strangled? She turned and moved across the deck with her hand across her face. She struck the low bulwark and there was a splash in the water. The next moment Winterstein had sprung to the side and plunged in after her. The second splash seemed only a couple of seconds after the first. I jumped to the helm only just in time: for the darky had let it slip from his hands and was staring round where Winterstein disappeared. I crammed the tiller hard down, shouting:

"Man overboard, man overboard."

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The next moment Crawford sprang on deck. The little schooner was fluttering in the wind; she came about with a jerk just as Crawford and the darky dropped over the side into the dingy and began rowing back.

"What is it?" cried Donkin, running aft.

"Mrs. Winterstein fell overboard and Winterstein went after her. How long shall we take to get back, do you think?"

"It is a quarter of a mile," he replied, while loosening a lifebuoy.

"Then we must pick them up?" I said.

"Of course," he answered. "I guess Winterstein's a good swimmer."

"First rate," I replied, but my heart was hurting with fear.

At this moment Daisy passed across my line of vision going to the bulwarks to look ahead. The moon was full out and the light quite strong again. I looked at her face and it seemed as if she were excited, expectant, resolute; no trace of horror, or fear. I gasped and suspicion came to me. Could it be that she had wished for it? Her sister—it was impossible.

Two minutes more and we were alongside the boat again. Crawford had everything ready as usual and had gone to the very spot, and as we came up in the wind beside the boat I left the helm to the nigger and leaned over the bulwarks. I was just in time, to see Winterstein come to the surface and haul himself up by the stern of the boat.

He stood there poised for a moment, and then hurled himself into the sea again as if he would go to the very bottom. My heart sank; he had not found her yet.

I called to Crawford to know if he had seen any trace of Rose.

"No sign," he replied, "and this is the skipper's fourth or fifth dive. I guess it's no good."

"I think you ought to come into the boat," he said a moment later, "and get Winterstein to come on board. He'll kill himself with his diving. I've never known a man keep down so long; he can't do it again."

I jumped into the boat, and a couple strokes took us to the spot where Winterstein had disappeared. We stared down on the dark surface, but there was not a sign or a sound. It seemed incredible that any man should be able to stay under so long.

Suddenly Crawford cried, "There he is," and gave a couple of quick strokes with his oar: slowly the body came to the surface. As we caught hold of him we saw that the blood was streaming from his nose and mouth and ears.

"He's killed himself," said Crawford, "I thought he would."

We got back to the schooner in a moment and lifted Winterstein on board.

As I was helping to carry him toward the companion with his head in my hands, Daisy caught hold of me:

"Dead?" she cried, her eyes wild in the frozen face.

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"I don't think so," I replied, "he stayed under too long. We must get him downstairs and bring him to."

"Ah," she gasped, and let my arm go.

We carried Winterstein down the cabin, turned him over and poured the water out of him. Afterwards I blew whiskey up his nose and poured some down his throat, and in a few minutes he revived.

"Where is she?" he said, struggling to rise. "Have you got her?"

"It's no good, Skipper," cried Crawford, holding him down. "We did our best. You did all one man could. She must have gone straight down. There's not a sign of her."

"I must find her," he said, struggling up. But he was too weak, he fell back fainting.

I do not know how the hours passed. I felt dazed; but with an ache at my heart and a sort of vague dread; it was all incredible to me. I could not believe that Rose was dead, drowned, that I should never see her again, that charming woman with her appealing, affectionate soul. It was too awful to realize. I thought I'd wake up and find it all a bad dream. Suddenly I noticed that my legs were cold. I put my hand down, my trousers were dripping wet from carrying Winterstein. The next moment I became conscious that I was dead tired, drunk tired, my eyes were closing of themselves. Instinctively I turned into the forecabin, stretched myself on the lockers and slept. . . .

When I awoke I did not know where I was: everything was strange to me. Then I remembered, and with the remembrance came the iron band about my chest constricting my heart. I got up and went on deck. No change there. The schooner was just drawing through the water, the sun shining; the light dancing on the wavelets; the air like wine. Dyer was at the helm. If only last night could have been blotted out? I could scarcely believe it was real. As I went aft, Crawford met me:

"How's Winterstein?" I asked.

"Sleeping now," he replied, "but he's been mighty bad. I never saw a man so done up—never. How did it happen? How did his wife go overboard? You saw it," and his eyes probed mine.

"She came out of the companion," I said, "the deck was on a bit of a slant . . . it all happened so quickly." I felt myself flushing. I was angry with my hesitation.

"But why did she? How did she sink like that?—it's mighty curious," he added suspiciously.

"Have you seen Miss Daisy?" I asked to change the current of his thought.

"Miss Daisy," he repeated, emphasizing the Miss, so that I noticed how strange it was for me to use the formal courtesy, "Miss Daisy ain't been up yet. The nigger thinks 'twas jealousy between the two sister; but he saw nothing. You must have seen."

I had time to recover myself, and choose a better way of putting him off the scent:

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"It's awful, awful," I said, as if to myself. I can't understand it." Crawford grunted, still suspicious.

But in spite of the tragedy, the suspicions, and the dark cloud of fear that hung over me as to what might happen next, the ordinary routine of life went on—luckily for all of us. A little after Abe called to me from the forecastle to come and have a cup of coffee. I found I was very hungry and after breakfast felt much better, more hopeful I mean and fitter to meet whatever might occur.

Half an hour later, Crawford was at the helm steering. I was standing near the foremast when suddenly Daisy came out of the companion and spoke to Crawford in passing. He replied in a monosyllable, without the usual greeting, and then stared up at the mainsail as if there was nothing more to be said. The instinctive puritanism of the race spoke in his awkward rude rebuff. I saw the color flood her cheeks and then ebb away. I loathed the man; I could have beaten him for his insolence; yet I was glad he had insulted her: why? She deserved it all and more, I thought hotly—and yet—she walked up the slanting deck, her little figure thrown back proudly. I crossed the windward between the masts to cut her off: why? I don't know. I only know that passion was in me; she seemed so far away from us all with that level, unseeing, unwavering glance; the proud aloofness attracted me. I had never before understood the fascination of her personality, of her courage. When we met she stopped and her eyes held me.

"I know you never meant it, Daisy," I said tamely and held out both my hands to her.

"Are you sure?" she replied, her eyes searching hard. The words shocked me. I did not realize that having just been insulted, she was all mistrust and temper; if only I had said the right word; but her pride angered me and for the moment I took her question that may have only been doubt of me for an admission of guilt. Fool that I was.

"God," I exclaimed violently and stepped back. Her face hardened and she swept past me without another word or look, leaving me there confused, angry, wild, and back of all full of forgiveness—of admiration.

I could not but dread the first meeting with Winterstein. What would he say, how would he take it all? I had not much time to let imagination wander. As I turned in my walk, he was there. His appearance was shocking; it wasn't only that he was white and seemed ill; his clothes hung on him; he was shrunken and his eyes were bad to look upon—despairing—sad at one moment, the next hot in self-anger and exasperation.

I went to him at once, my heart full of pity. I saw he was all broken.

"I'm glad you're up," I cried cordially; "the air'll do you good."

He looked at me with such dumb misery in the glance that my eyes pricked: he nodded his head once or twice and then went over to the low poop and sat down.

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A little later Dyer went to him and said breakfast was ready. He shook his head merely and sat on gazing moodily at the water.

The same thing happened at dinner-time, but when pressed to eat by Crawford he replied, "’twould choke me. I’m all right."

The sweet old routine of life had done me good so I thought it would do good to everyone and should be kept up; accordingly I went to dinner in the cabin as usual. As Daisy did not appear I knocked at the stateroom and asked her to come. A minute or so later she entered quietly, but she hardly ate anything and spoke not at all. At supper it was the same thing.

Winterstein sat on the poop till far into the night. When Crawford came on watch, I took Winterstein below: he said merely, "I shan’t sleep," but threw himself on the cabin sofa without undressing.

The next day passed in the same way, but before dinner Crawford told me that he could not get Winterstein to take anything.

"If he doesn’t eat, he’ll go crazy," he said. "He’s just eatin’ himself."

I told this to Daisy. She looked at me with set face.

"I have no influence," she said slowly, as if speaking to herself, "no influence, but I’ll try." Her face went rigid as she spoke. I nodded and went with her up the companion ladder. But Winterstein didn’t yield at first to her asking; he shook his head, merely saying, "I can’t."

"The soup will help you," she said, and then slowly, "Rose would wish you to take it!"

"O, God!" he cried starting up and stretching out his arms, as if he couldn’t bear to hear the name—and then sank down again. She put the cup in his hands and he took it and drank, and then relapsed again into his moody brooding silence.

When she returned she went straight to her cabin and so another day went by.

The next day Winterstein took some soup I brought him. In the evening Crawford proposed to return at once to ’Frisco.

"I don’t like his looks," he said; "he’s worrying himself crazy and I guess the sooner we all get away from each other the better; perhaps we’ll be able to forget the whole darned thing then and live again."

Donkin agreed with him, and so did I and the ship’s course was altered.

Daisy got into the way of walking the deck with Donkin. He adored the very planks she trod on and perhaps that touched her. Anyway, she was with him now more than with any of us. It made me angry and scornful, kept my jealousy alive, prevented me from understanding her or forgiving—I always saw the two heads together and the fatal kiss.

* * *

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In this puzzling world mistakes or blunders often have worse results than crimes. The momentary yielding to passion brought the tragedy and the first tragedy inevitably drew on another.

We had got into the Equatorial Current and were making fine time up the coast toward 'Frisco. The weather was just what sailors like: a fair wind perfectly steady day after day; bright skies, and blue seas with scarcely a white horse to be seen. We did not alter the set of the canvas for days together: there was nothing for us to do. Unfortunately nothing to take our minds off the tragedy, nothing to change the feeling of misery and apprehension. I never passed such miserable days: they seem like a nightmare to me still.

One morning I heard a row on deck and then what sounded like a shot. I threw a coat on and ran quickly up the companion. To my astonishment there was no one steering, the helm was lashed amidship. I heard a shout from overhead and saw Donkin and Crawford in the main-rigging near the heel of the top-mast. The next moment I noticed Winterstein seated on deck between the two masts. He was playing with a dead snapper making believe that it was about to bite him, drawing his hand away quickly from the dead mouth with a cackle of amusement.

"Good God!" I wondered, "what's the matter?" As I went toward him it suddenly came to me: "He's mad," I said to myself. I was all broken up with pity.

The men in the rigging shouted, "Look out," just in time to put me on my guard: for Winterstein had a revolver beside him, and as soon as I came within his line of vision he took up the gun and leveled it at me crying:

"There's another of 'em," and fired without more ado.

I called out to him and backed away, but as he was preparing to fire again, I slid across the deck to the lee rigging and went up as fast as I could. Neither Donkin nor Crawford had anything new to tell me, except that Crawford had been slightly wounded by the first shot Winterstein had fired at him. It had just touched the right shoulder.

"It burns a bit," he said, "though it's not much more than skin deep."

The nigger and Dyer, it appeared, had both fled to the forecastle. We quickly resolved that the moment Winterstein went down below, one of us should seize him and the others tie him up.

"If I could only get him away from his gun," said Donkin, "I'd find out in five minutes whether he's as strong as he thinks himself."

"You'll find out how strong he is soon enough," I replied. "He's about the best man with his hands I ever saw. It will be all the three of us can do to get the better of him."

"I've never seen the man yet," said Donkin sturdily, "I was afraid of."

The trial came very soon. Of a sudden Winterstein stood up, threw the dogfish overboard and leaving his revolver on deck walked

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quickly aft, and disappeared down the companion. The next moment we slid down to the deck, Crawford arming himself with an iron belaying pin, a fearsome club at close quarters. I crept stealthily along the weather bulwarks to the companion and Donkin strode boldly down the deck. I think it must have been Donkin's heavy step that Winterstein heard; for just before I got to the companion he passed up it like a flash and stood facing him.

"Ho! Ho!" he cried, laughing, "Mr. Donkin wants some gruel, does he? Take it, take it then," and jumping in as lightly as a ballet dancer, he struck out right and left. His left caught Donkin in the face and the blood spurted as if the man had been hit with a hammer, the second blow caught him on the neck and hurled him down.

"Ho! Ho!" cried the madman again, dancing about so as to face. Crawford.

"Crawford wants some, too."

Fortunately for Crawford, Donkin was a very strong man, and scarcely had he been knocked down when he picked himself up again. He was angry, too, and his anger did him no good. With his head down like a bull he rushed at the skipper. Winterstein sidestepped him to windward and as he passed caught him a lefthanded shot under the ear with such force that Donkin seemed to touch nothing till he crashed into the lee bulwarks and lay there quiet enough. My chance had come: Winterstein was a yard of me. As he struck Donkin I threw, my arms, about his waist from behind, pinning his right arm to his side. At the same time with the instinct of the wrestler I lifted him from the deck so as to make him as helpless as possible. For a moment he struggled wildly, roaring like a bull; then in a second broke my grip and got his right hand free. But I still held him and as I was well behind him he could not get at me easily. But he was too strong. The next moment his right hand had caught my collar and shifted to my neck and ear, and I felt myself being dragged round. I knew that the struggle could only last a second or two, and just as I was expecting his blow I heard a thud; the writhing form in my arms grew still and heavy and slid down on the deck. Crawford had run across and struck Winterstein on the temple with the iron belaying pin. Almost at the same moment Dyer and Abraham Lincoln ran up on deck. We hauled Donkin up out of the lee scuppers and told Dyer to throw water over him. We then wiped Winterstein's bleeding head and carried him down below to his berth, where we tied his hands and feet. Just after we had laid him out, Daisy came out of her little stateroom. She looked at us and in a phrase or two Crawford flung the tragedy at her. She did not seem to notice the man. She came straight to Winterstein.

"Leave him to me;" she said imperiously kneeling down beside him.

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The second tragedy seemed to fall on numbed sense. I scarcely remember any sequence of time in what occurred afterwards. I knew it soon came on to blow, but whether it was that day or the next or later, I could not tell. I remembered that Winterstein appeared on deck again and sat in his old place on the poop gazing out over the sea. His madness seemed to have left him, but his brooding silence now was often broken by periods during which he moved about muttering to himself incessantly. Crawford said he was talking of his wife or to her. He was tragic, terrible—a figure of despair.

* * *

We had altered our course again and were steering Nor'west. I The Nor'east wind had grown to a gale, while the current was running strong under our feet. Between the tide and the wind the sea grew into hillocks and hills and still it blew harder and harder. . . .

Long ago we had taken all the sails off her, leaving only a storm jib and a rag of tarpaulin in the mainmast rigging aft, and under these two handkerchiefs the schooner lay over so that her masts were near the water.

Late in the afternoon Crawford asked me to keep a sharp lookout.

"'Frisco?" I asked, and he nodded.

I never was so glad of anything in my life, the band round my chest seemed to loosen.

The sun was going down in a sort of yellow glare. For over an hour or so Winterstein had been standing by the tarpaulin in the mainmast rigging staring over the waste of water. I clawed my way aft to him. The tarpaulin sheltered us from the fury of the wind and made an oasis of quiet in the uproar.

"We'll soon be in 'Frisco!" I cried.

He looked at me with unseeing hopeless eyes: my heart turned to water. Suddenly he caught me by the shoulder.

"I can't stand it," he said, as if confiding to me; but in a tone so low I could hardly hear him. "I can't stand it."

"Time will soften the pain," I said. The words rang false even to me.

"No, no," he shook his head. "It gets worse. If it had been an accident, I might have stood it: if some one else had done it, perhaps; but I did it, I: that's the thorn that festers and stings and burns, and gets worse not better, worse all the time. . . . I was glad to go mad: I wish I could go mad again and not think of it all the time." And he passed his hand over his forehead in weary wretchedness. . . .

"If I hadn't loved her so, I might sleep now and then and forget. I never cared for any other woman: she was perfect to me from the beginning. "Hell," he broke off raging, "what sort of a fool was I—eh? was there ever such a fool—a damned fool—damned. . .

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"I don't know why I did it: it just took me at the moment. Hell," and his eyes were wild. "I'm not fit to live: this world's no place for fools," and he laughed mirthlessly. . . .

"I can't stand it, I just can't stand it! Oh, my sweet: fancy hurting you! . . .

"Is there any other life, eh?" I could not answer—my heart ached for him. "I never took much stock in it; but I'll soon know. So long," and he turned into the force of the wind and strode aft. Even then I noticed that he could walk the deck in the gale that seemed to blow my breath down my throat and choke me.

I clawed my way forward again. Winterstein was beyond my help. I was glad of the gale and the wild seas and the danger, I didn't want to think. I was filled with fear and pain. . . .

The wind came harder and harder. The tremendous weight of it seemed to flatten the sea, and you could only put your head above the bulwarks if you held on with both hands.

All that night Crawford stuck to the helm and it needed all his seamanship to bring us through the storm.

At twelve o'clock we lifted the light and a little later we got a little under the shelter of the land and the sea was not so bad. But the bar gave us an awful half hour. The little schooner came out of the broken water with decks swept clean: the boat had gone and all the bulwarks, and *The Rose* was leaking in a dozen places: she would never go to sea again.

When we came to anchor off Meiggs's wharf about three o'clock, we had all had enough of it. In spite of the fear that the little schooner might founder under us and though I was frozen cold and wet, I went below and slept without turning in. I had not had a wink for two nights and had eaten nothing but a biscuit for thirty-six hours.

Crawford woke me, bright sunshine fell down the hatchway: as soon as I opened my eyes, I knew something was wrong.

"What is it?" I cried.

"Winterstein went overboard in the night," he said, "I don't know when, and the girl's been in faint after faint. Donkin's going to take her up to the house. I guess you had better get up, she may want to see you. But don't say anything harsh to her: she's had it bad enough . . .

I was on deck in five minutes in time to see Donkin bring Daisy out of the companion and take her across the ladder. He fairly lifted her into the boat, and as he turned to row her ashore I caught a glimpse of her face. It made me gasp: I never saw such a change, never. Her face had gone quite small like a little child's, and as white as if it had been made out of snow. . . .

I could not stop on board the schooner; I guess everybody left it as soon as he could. I came East the same week and never saw any of 'em again.

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* * *

A pretty bad story, ain't it? A brute of a story. Just like life. No meaning in it: the punishment out of all proportion to the sin. Sometimes it's like that. Sometimes things a thousand times worse go unpunished and then for a little mistake or slip, tragedy piles itself on tragedy. There ain't no meaning in it, no sense. I don't believe there's any purpose either, anywhere; it's just chance.

The Judge broke off.

The dreadful story had held us; now some of the men stretched themselves, lit cigars, or took drinks, but no one spoke for quite a while.

Suddenly Charlie Railton said:

"That Daisy was a wild piece, sure; but I thought you were going to tell us something about Mrs. Amory, Judge. I thought perhaps you knew her."

"I knew a good deal about her," replied Barnett quietly, "though I never met her. I was mixed up in her affairs after her husband died. I was agent for the land she bought for almshouses. I let her have it cheaper because of the object.

"I ought to have met her a dozen times, but I never did, strange to say. Of course I knew all about her for the last two or three years. I knew she was a mighty good woman. Her lawyer, Hutchins, whom I knew well, always said so, said she was the best woman he ever saw, and one of the kindest. Amory just worshiped her, I believe, and she brought up his daughters by his first wife splendidly. She had only one child of her own and it died. It nearly killed her, Hutchins said. A mighty good woman, and I ought to have met her a dozen times, but it never happened so. . . .

"When she died Hutchins insisted that I should go to the funeral. You know the house. I guess it's one of the finest in the States. They laid her out in the music-room. It looks like a church with its high painted windows and old tapestries and open timber roof: the paintings are all masterpieces: three or four Rembrandts, I believe. Well, they did the room up as a *chapelle ardente*—and laid her out there in state, and all Philadelphia went to visit and a good-many of her girls cried over her. I went with Hutchins and nothing would do but he would have me go right up to the coffin. The moment I looked at her, the moment I saw her face, the little face no bigger than your hand, all frozen white; I knew her. That was the face I had seen in the boat when Donkin rowed her ashore thirty years before, 'Jezebel's daughter,' I used to call her to myself. . . .

"I was just struck dumb, but I knew that was why I had never met her. She had not wanted to meet me. I was a bit surprised when two or three days later I had a letter from her. Hutchins had to read the will and in it he found a letter addressed to me. I have not got it by me, but I can tell you some of what was in it; she had no reason to be

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ashamed of it. I was wrong to judge her as I did at the time. Young people are mighty severe in their judgments. As you get older you get more tolerant. . . .

“With the letter there was a little box, and in the box a string of black pearls, the same I had given her sister. Mrs. Amory began by telling me that she had wanted to give them back to me, as soon as Donkin had told her they were mine, but all trace of me had been lost, and she had never heard of me again till long after her husband’s death, when the end was near. She asked me to give the black pearls to my eldest daughter Kate, and she left me a string of white ones to give to my youngest daughter. She seemed to know all about us. . . . She told me I had always misjudged her and I guess I had. . . .

“Winterstein, it appeared, knew her first; used to meet her at the baths and swim with her and make up to her. She thought he was in love with her, and girl-like gave him her soul; made him her god. Just before she went back to school she brought him home and introduced him to her sister, thinking that through her sister she would keep in touch with him. She heard no more till her sister told her they were married. She said it drove her nearly crazy. . . .

“I guess Rose never knew that Daisy loved him, but it was a bad tangle. Daisy did not say that Rose knew, but she said Rose ought to have known—anybody would have known. I think she was wrong. She was judging Rose by herself; she was mighty quick and observant while Rose just lived like a flower. Besides Rose would never have wanted her on board the schooner if she had even suspected the truth. No; Rose acted in all innocence. But Daisy couldn’t see that; she was hurt too badly to judge fairly.

“She did not excuse herself in the letter. She confessed it was her wounded vanity led her to provoke Winterstein. But she had no notion of anything worse. ‘I saw he admired me,’ she said, ‘and that pleased me.’ I was hard and reckless; I felt hurt and cheated: he was mine and I could have made a great man of him, I thought. Oh, I was horribly to blame; but he caught my head that night and kissed me against my will. I could not get away. If I had been standing up, his lips should never have touched me. You will believe me; won’t you? and forgive me; now that I am dead? . . .

“I forgave her all right,” the Judge said, “or rather I understood her and there was nothing to forgive. There’s Angel and Devil in all of us, Charlie, and the Heaven and Hell, too, is of our own making, it seems to me. . . .”

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Isaac and Rebecca

PERSONS OF THE STORY.

REBECCA ISAAC. *A brunette of seventeen, very pretty, small with regular features and brilliant coloring. David Isaac's daughter.*

DAVID ISAAC. *A Jew about sixty with high narrow forehead and soft, indecisive chin, gray hair and beard, a little bent.*

REUBEN LEVISON. *A bunker, very rich. A little shorter than Isaac, inclined to be stout, bald. David Isaac's cousin.*

MRS. GOLDSCHMIDT. *An old woman attending David Isaac.*

Rebecca. So I can't get the dress. Oh, it's too bad. I've been working for a fortnight and have everything ready, and now I can't go to the dance. It's too bad. *[Stamps with her rage.]*

Isaac. But vy not, tear; you can vear something else.

Rebecca. I've nothing to wear. My clothes are too shocking. I never get a new frock—never.

Isaac. I'm sorry, tear; but I can't get six pounds in a moment.

Rebecca. A moment—a week, you mean; you said a week ago you'd try, try—pooh !

Isaac. And I did try, my tear, I did indeed, but I'm getting old and I can't sell de jewelry like I used and dey won't trust me now mit fine pieces, only cheap shtuff.

Rebecca. Oh, if I were a man, if only I were a man!

Isaac. Don't say dat, tear! Vot would you do? You are so pretty, like an ainchel, my little girl. *[He puts his hand caressingly on her shoulders.]* Everything will come right mit a little patience.

Rebecca. Patience, that's what you always say, patience—I hate the word. . . . Why don't you see your cousin Reuben? *[Isaac shrugs his shoulders despairingly and closes his eyes in token that nothing's to be hoped from that quarter: the girl goes on :]*

Why not take me to see him?

Isaac. Vot could you do? He's as old as me.

Rebecca. Oh, I don't know what I'd do: but I'd do anything rather than rot away in this hole like the others. I hate the Commercial Road and the flashy foreigners, leering and sneering. I love gentleman like you see in the park on Sunday, quiet, dignified. . . . I hate common people and poverty. It's a crime to be poor—a crime.

Isaac. Oh, my tear, don't say dat: I've always worked hard, always. I thought honesty und vork would make me rich, but they didn't. I've always told my customers the truth, said what de tings cost or nearly: but the world likes to be cheated, likes to tink the false stones real—

Rebecca. And the false stones are real. Oh, if I were a man!

I'd tell the women the rings would buy 'em sweethearts and money and happiness. I'd fool them as they want to be fooled. Why not? If you don't, some one else will and you'll get left, that's all,

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stranded, old, poor, despised; poor—it's the only crime!

Isaac. I was always too scrupulous, always too honorable, and Now it's too late to begin all over again. Besides, nobody trusts me now, dey all know I'm poor. Dey used to tink I vos rich and a miser and dey would give me anyting, now dey know, dey don't trust me no more, dey know I am honest and dey don't trust me.

Rebecca. Why didn't you go to your cousin and make him take you into his bank? Not now, I mean, but when you first married.

Isaac. I went to him, but he said I vos a fool to marry a poor girl vidout a penny of *dot*, and Rachel ven she heard it vos angry and would not let me go near him even ven you vos born.

Rebecca. He doesn't know anything about me, does he? Nothing? You're sure? . . . Tell me about him? Is he big and strong and hard?

Isaac. He's smaller nor me, a little shtout, bald he vas too; but he has a vay vid 'im.

Rebecca. Is the bank large?

Isaac. Oh, a great place mid dozens of clerks and brass railings, and you hear ze money singing all day long—ah!

Rebecca [clapping her hands] Oh, tell me all about it, all! I looked into a bank the other day; it was bare and cold, but dignified. Has he a room to himself? And a man outside the door to stop people going in?

Isaac. Yes, on the first floor. He is not near the clerks. All by himself upstairs in a great room, vid thick carpets and beautiful chairs vid green leather, real Chippendale chairs—beautiful. And dere is a room in which you vait, mit all de papers, papers in Cherman, French and English. And dere is anodder room mit a long table and blotting pads and seats all about. Oh, it is a great place!

Rebecca. But tell me about him? Is he married? What is his wife like? Has he any children? Tell me all about him.

Isaac. I don't know anyting, my tear, I've never asked.

Rebecca. Never asked! Oh! Has he a motor? Is his chauffeur in livery? Have you seen a woman in it? Oh, if I had only seen the outside of it, I'd know if he was married or not. I'd know from the chauffeur, I'd know from the look of the carriage. Is it open or closed? Does it ever have flowers in it? Where do you keep your eyes?

Isaac. I've only seen it outside de door. I've never looked at it except to tink how fine it was and how big.

Rebecca. Is it big? How many seats inside?

Isaac. I don't know.

Rebecca. Oh, my goodness! My goodness! How shall I get away from all this? How shall I? Can't you take me to see him?

Isaac. How can I, my tear, how can I?

Rebecca. When is his birthday?

Isaac. His birthday? Oh, soon, now, in July, the fift.

Rebecca. That's only a fortnight to wait and then you must take

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me. I should have a present for him. I'll ask Julia to embroider some handkerchiefs with his initials, and I'll say I did them.

Isaac [admiringly]. You clever girl!

Rebecca. Now you must go out every day, father, and tell lies about the jewelry. What does it matter? Get the girls to put it on. Tell them the rings make their hands look pretty, that a necklace makes them look rich, like fine ladies. Say anything to make me enough money for a new dress. I must have a new dress.

Isaac. I vill do my best, but—

Rebecca [pouting]. But, but, always but—

[July. Isaac waiting. Rebecca dressed to go out.]

Isaac. Vy, you've got your hair down. Oh, it is pretty. You do look pretty, but dat dress is tight. No? Vell, you know best. But you've powdered your face. Not? Vell, you know best. I like you as you vos every day. You look younger and older. I don't know vot. Vell, vell, you know best.

Rebecca. My hair's down, of course, I'm fifteen, remember.

Isaac. He! he! Vot a girl it is! You are seventeen, Rebecca You vos born on the Fourth of April, 1887. Dot's vy ve called you "Jubelee" for your second name, dot's vy.

Rebecca. My second name's Judith, and I was born in July, '90. I'm not fifteen yet.

Isaac. My tear, you are mistaken. You are seventeen years past, I'm sure.

Rebecca [stamping]. You stupid, stupid. I wonder mother could stand you. I'm fifteen, I tell you.

Isaac. Vell, vell, my dear. If you've made up your mind I'm sure you're right. You know best, just as your mother vos always right. Always a master-woman, a—

Rebecca. Oh, come along. You'd prose away there all day. *[After starting.]* What will you say to Uncle Reuben?

Isaac. Vy, vot you, told me. Dot I vant him to know you, you are so pretty—vot?

Rebecca. What age is he exactly? What is he like?

Isaac. He's my first cousin. He must be over fifty. He's shtout and shtrong. He's only had to take care of himself all his life. His father vos rich. But vot vill you say to him?

Rebecca. I don't know till I see him. He's very rich, you say, a real millionaire? An English millionaire?

Isaac. My tear, he's rich enough for anything. . He has two or tree million. A house in Hampstead like a palace, and servants everywhere. He is *de* Reuben Levison—*de* great banker.

Rebecca. And you went to him when mother was ill and he would not help you. What did he say then?

Isaac. He said so I make my bed so I must lie on it, and tings like

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dat.

Rebecca. How can men be such brutes? If he had been poor with children of his own, I could understand it. But rich and without any one, I can't. He must be hard like stone and cruel.

Isaac. Oh, no, my tear. But the rich have to refuse to give at de beginning and de habit becomes second nature to dem. Besides, if dey didn't love money more dan anyting, dey'd never get rich, never.

Rebecca. Why didn't you get rich. Didn't mother want you to get rich? Didn't she spur you on?

Isaac. She loved me, and ve vos happy. I vos too honest. I told de truth, not lies. But ven I tink of you, I am sorry. I solt more this week from lies, and it pleases everybody better. I told the girls dey all looked so sweet and beautiful, as you told me to. Dot's how I got you the dress, and it is pretty. But it's short, do you like it so short? You are very pretty in it.

Rebecca. I'm getting hot. I'll have to use my puff. Why couldn't we drive? Everything is against the poor—everything. . . . You must tell him I'm the prettiest girl in the Road and not fifteen yet.

Isaac. But vy so young, my tear, fifteen, it's a child.

Rebecca. Julia Hoppe said old men all liked children. That's why, if you must know.

Isaac. How clever you are, my tear.

Rebecca. If you hated poverty like I do, you'd be clever.

[Reuben Levison's office.]

[Reuben is seated at a table. He looks at Isaac with the aversion]

Reuben. What can I do for you, David, what do you want? *Reuben.* What can I do for you, David, what do you want?

Isaac. It's your birthday, Reuben, and I've brought my girl to -see you.

Mr. Levison. Your girl? What do you mean? Your wife?

Isaac [hurriedly]. No, no, my wife's dead. I mean my little child. She's the prettiest girl in the Road—the prettiest in London, and so smart and clever, and she wants to see you, Reuben—her rich uncle!

Mr. Levison. But I don't want to see her, I've too much to do, and I can't waste time on children. I'm busy, you must tell her that.

Isaac [twisting his hand about]. Oh Reuben, I, can't, I can't, she'll be so disappointed at not seeing you. You can't refuse. She has worked your initials on some handkerchiefs, oh so beautifully. She is the prettiest girl in all London, she is like a flower.

Mr. Levison. What's her name? What age is she?

Isaac [hurriedly]. Her name's Rebecca, she's—she's grown up.

Mr. Levison. All right, bring her in. I have no time to spare.

I can only give her a moment or two. I thought perhaps you wanted to see me on some business.

Isaac. Oh, I'll bring her, I'll bring her at vonce. *[He hurries out of the room.]*

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[A moment or two after; Rebecca comes in alone. Reuben Levison looks at her, his sulky, annoyed air vanishes. He gets up as the girl comes toward him.]

Mr. Levison. Take a chair, Miss Isaac, take a chair. *[Putting one ready for her.]* What can I do for you?

Rebecca *[smiling saucily]*. Tell me first that the uncle is not ashamed of his niece.

Mr. Levison [a little embarrassed, laughs], Ashamed, indeed, who could be ashamed of so pretty a girl?

Rebecca *[pouting]*. Yet you've let all these years pass without caring to know anything about the pretty girl.

Mr. Levison. Now is that fair, Miss Rebecca? How did I know that Miss Isaac was so pretty? How could I guess? I thought you were a child.

Rebecca *[smiling]*. Well, I forgive you now. *[She produces the handkerchiefs]*. I've brought you something for your birthday. But perhaps, Mrs. Levison won't like you to use them. You see I've worked your initial on them. *[She lays them on the desk.]*

Mr. Levison [laughing]. They're very pretty, and I'm very much obliged. Of course I'll use them. There's no Mrs. Levison—you see I've had no time to get married; now I'm too old, too ugly.

Rebecca. No, indeed you're not ugly. I won't have you slander yourself. And you don't look a bit old. I hate boys, they're no good. *[She throws him a long glance from under her eyelashes.]*

Mr. Levison. [He gets up as if drawn by a magnet and stands over her.] I wish I was young and handsome enough for you, Rebecca. May I call you Rebecca?

Rebecca. Of course you may. *[Seriously.]* I don't care for handsome men; they're always thinking of themselves. *[Looking up at him.]* You look strong and I love strength.

Mr. Levison. Oh, I'm strong enough, but I'm old, little girl. What age are you, Rebecca? You look half child, half woman.

Rebecca *[looking up at him]*. I'm fifteen, nearly.

Mr. Levison [has laid his hands on her shoulder, but now draws them away quickly]. Only fifteen, I say, that's too young. My God! I'd have thought you sixteen at least.

[He moves back from her, his face a little flushed.]

Rebecca *[looking at him with eyes that drink him in]*. I said "nearly fifteen," but I may be nearer sixteen. *[Archly.]* Mayn't I? Don't you know that all women make themselves younger than they are. *[She smiles.]* Suppose I said I was sixteen past?

Mr. Levison. [His face clears, and he steps nearer her, smiling. She rises.] But are you? That's the point. *[He lifts her chin in his hand.]*

Rebecca *[burning her boats]*. Yes, I'm over sixteen.

Mr. Levison. Really?

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Rebecca [nods her head]. I was born in '87, I'm a Jubilee girl. I'm just seventeen, you see, quite old already.

Mr. Levison. [Grown bold again, he slips his arm round her shoulders.] I think you're a witch, Rebecca, and know just what I am thinking of.

Rebecca [looking up at him]. What are you thinking of?

Mr. Levison. [Their eyes meet.] Of you, of course. I think you're one of the prettiest girls I've ever seen in my life.

Rebecca [looking up at him again]. But do you mean it?

Mr. Levison [drawing her to him]. Of course I mean it, and clever, too, if all your father says is true. By the way *[he draws back again]* where is he?

Rebecca [negligently]. In the waiting-room, I suppose.

Mr. Levison. [His eyes narrow cunningly]. Why didn't he come in with you?

Rebecca [her eyebrows lifted]. I did not want him to come. Do you want him?

Mr. Levison [suspiciously]. Why does he wait?

Rebecca. To take me home again, I suppose: he brought me, you know.

Mr. Levison. Oh, I don't like that, you see I have my business to think of. People may want to see me at any time. I'm really very busy. I told your father so. *[Goes back to his desk.]*

Rebecca [biting her lips]. I'm sorry. Do you want me to go? I'm sorry.

Mr. Levison [recalled to full self-possession]. You see I'm busy, my dear Miss Isaac. I'm very busy and your father'll get tired waiting.

Rebecca. He's used to waiting for me. He's reading some old German paper, and has forgotten all about poor little Rebecca.

Mr. Levison [seating himself resolutely at his desk again and beginning to-gather up some papers]. It was very kind of you to come, Miss Rebecca. A very agreeable surprise, but I don't like to keep Isaac waiting, and I'm really very busy this morning.

Rebecca. Well, good-bye, Uncle *[going toward him and holding out her hand, adding in a low, reproachful voice]:* You're not angry with me for coming, are you? I was so eager to meet the great Mr. Levison. But now I'm afraid you're angry with me.

[Mr. Levison.] [gets up and takes her hand]. Oh, no, I'm not angry. Rebecca: you know I'm not angry. But—but I am really very busy, some other day, eh? You'll come again, eh? Another time—by yourself, eh?

[Their eyes meet again, and again he flushes while putting his other hand on hers. She casts her eyes down, turns and walks quietly to the door.]

Mr. Levison. [As she disappears he puffs out his breath.] My God,

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she's pretty, a little devil, a little witch. But I did right. That old father's cunning. What did he want, waiting there? Down at heel, as usual. How much would he want? . . . Phew! I am hot. . . . Who would have thought such an old Cheap-Jack would have had such a daughter. I very nearly kissed her. If I had, would she have taken it? My God, I believe she would. What a sweet girl! But the father outside the door. Pough, it makes you careful. . . . I wonder is she sixteen past or did she only say it to give me confidence. Oh, she must be sixteen or seventeen. She's perfectly formed, her legs and breasts, yes, seventeen she must be, a perfect little witch. . . . I wonder does she know what she's doing? Sometimes she has such a child-air, her eyes are liquid. Some girls are coquettes in the cradle. Whew! . . . I must have Rubie in. Shall I give orders not to let them in again? No, I won't. *[Rings bell on desk, the door opens at once. A sort of upper servant enters.]* Send Mr. Rubie to me, and I'm "not in" to Mr. Isaac any more, you understand? to Mr. Isaac; but if Miss Isaac calls, let her in.

Servant. Yes, sir.

* * *

Isaac. Vot did he say, tear, vot did he say?

Rebecca. Why did you wait? Let us go.

Isaac. Was he nice? Did he—was he kind?

Rebecca [in a hard voice]. Let us go.

[She goes out with her parasol ready to open, and flashing bright smiles to every one she meets. Isaac trots behind, but when they get into the street he ranges up beside her.]

Isaac. Vot did he say, my tear? I am very anxious.

Rebecca [looking at him with hard eyes]. What was there to say? You were on the other side of the door. Why didn't you go away?

Isaac. Oh, my tear. I did whatever you wanted. I thought it best to be near you. If you had called out I would have come in at vonce.

[Rebecca looks at him contemptuously.]

Rebecca. Come in? What for. *[Puts her nose in the air.]*

Isaac [with his irresponsible optimism tries again and again to engage her in conversation]. Vot fine offices and vot nice servants! His man, dat man in black came in and spoke to me. He remembered me from years ago. Reuben's not married. I thought you would like to know. The man told me he lived alone at Hampstead *[Rebecca looks at him pityingly]* and he has two motors, one closed for the city, and an open one. Oh, he has got on tremendously. Lords come to him in his office und great people. *[Rebecca looks at him reflectively.]* Oh, I found out a lot.

Rebecca. You did. What did you tell the man?

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Isaac. I say where we live, and he ask me who you were; I say my daughter. I am proud of you, tear. I said I had brought you because you had wanted to come, that you had worked some handkerchiefs for your Uncle's birthday.

Rebecca [looks at him]. Why must you be a fool!

Isaac. Fool! Vy, he want to know, and I am proud of you, so proud, Rebecca.

Rebecca. Silly. I would ask everything and tell nothing. You ! You chatter, chatter, chatter, so that everybody knows your business. That's why I say you're foolish. I'd tell nothing.

Isaac. But, Rebecca! why are you angry mit me? I can only do my best. *[Her face is resigned and a little weary.]* I do all I can for you. I do my best.

Rebecca [looks at him and sums it all up dispassionately]. Why don't you go away and leave me?

Isaac. I'm sorry I did not. I thought I would be a help to you.

Rebecca. Help! You can't help me; you can't even help yourself. You are what they call unlucky. *[She shrugs her shoulders.]*

Isaac [drops his head]. Dat's vot Rachel used to say, I vos unlucky, and perhaps I vos. But it's being too honest that has kept me down. To be honest and truthful one should be rich—I'm too good; the poor have no right to be honest. . . .

* * *

A MONTH LATER

[Rebecca comes into the room dressed for going out. Isaac looks at her.]

Isaac. Vere did you get dat dress? How grown up you look! Oh, I like you in dat long dress best! It makes you look taller, and you've done your hair up, too. Vere are you going? Oh, you are pretty.

Rebecca [looks at him quietly]. I am going for a walk. I shall perhaps be out to dinner. Julia Hoppe may give me dinner.

Isaac. Oh, you're going mit Julia? Well, she is nice, but a little fast, my tear, isn't she? You will be careful?

Rebecca. It's better to be a little fast than slow these times. *[Drawing on a long glove as she speaks.]*

Isaac. Vot splendid gloves! You must have paid six or seven shilling for dem gloves? Vere are you going?

Rebecca [sharply]. Ask me no questions, I'll tell you no lies. I'm going to Julia Hoppe's if you must know.

Isaac. May I come? I don't like you valking about de streets alone.

Rebecca. You may come if you want to. But you had much better go out with the tray. It's stopped raining now, and this dress is not paid for yet.

Isaac. But vould you like me to come?

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Rebecca. I don't care, I think you had better make your round. I'm all right. Nothing'll happen to me. Nothing ever does happen in this dull hole. Now don't worry: I'll be back soon. Nobody'll run away with me. *[She goes out of the door.]* Worse luck!

* * *

[Mr. Levison seated in his room, Rebecca enters quickly.]

Mr. Levison. How did you get in? Who let you in? Where's Lewis?

Rebecca [with color in cheeks]. Three questions in one breath: I walked in, simply. No, no! *[Coming close to him.]* I'll tell the truth. I waited till Lewis went to the lift with the gentleman who just came out, and then I slipped in. Are you glad to see me?

Mr. Levison [cries]. I don't know. I'm glad, yes. Who could help being glad? But I'm afraid it's not wise. Where's your father?

Rebecca. I left him at home. *[Taking a seat]* Did you wish to see him?

Mr. Levison [dryly]. Not exactly.

Rebecca. You don't like him, but you're wrong. He's a good sort—too good, that's the worst of him.

Mr. Levison [doubtfully]. Is he? I dare say. But he's poor, and—and he always talks morality.

Rebecca. Talks morality?

Mr. Levison. Yes, he says he's poor because he's honest and tells the truth, and all that. That moral talk's frightening: in business it always means an extravagantly high price. No one talks morality who does not mean to get six times as much as the thing's worth; at any rate that's my experience.

Rebecca [laughing heartily]. How funny you are and how interesting! Every word that's said then you think has something to do with the money people want to get from you?

Mr. Levison. Of course.

Rebecca. Poor Daddy! You don't understand him. There's no purpose in what he says. He's really very good and kind.

Mr. Levison. He brought you here, didn't he?

Rebecca. No. *[Hesitates, then boldly.]* I wanted to come. I came alone.

Mr. Levison. Really? And he's not waiting outside for you? Not at the corner?

Mr. Levison [rising, but still hesitating]. And you really are nearly seventeen, not fifteen?

Rebecca [getting up gravely, and turning round so that he can see her long dress]. Now do I look fifteen? I was born in '87, I'm a Jubilee girl. *[Sitting down again.]* You must believe me. Why my second name's "Jubilee."

Mr. Levison. Is it? H'm! Write it down there, will you? H'm.

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Your father'll be expecting you home soon—to dinner?

Rebecca. No. I told him I was going to dine with a girl friend, Miss Hoppe. There now: *[laughing]*. Does that please you?

Mr. Levison. That's right. Always tell me everything and we'll get along like a house on fire. *[Goes over to her.]* So you wanted to see me, eh? little girl? *[She looks up at him.]* Would you come out to lunch with me, Rebecca?

Rebecca [formally]. I should be very pleased.

Mr. Levison [flushing slightly]. You look much better in that dress, taller: Won't you stand up and let me see?

[Rebecca stands up.]

Mr. Levison [embarrassed]. You are pretty! *[Puts his hand on her shoulder and draws her to him.]* If you were not so young, I'd ask you for a kiss. *[Slides his arm down to her waist.]* Would you give me one, Rebecca?

[Rebecca slowly lifts her eyes to his. Mr. Levison kisses her on the lips, he feels her yield herself.]

Mr. Levison [noisily, to get rid of the significance of the act]. There, now we are friends, eh? Oh, you are lovely, lovely. *[Moves away a step.]* What lips you have! we'll be great friends, won't We? *[Rebecca nods and looks up in his face]* Will you do something for me?

Rebecca [gravely, like a child] Yes, I will.

Mr. Levison. I want you to go out first, or my clerks'll talk and I don't want 'em to talk about you. I like you too much for that. You go out and wait for me at the next corner, the corner of the street leading to the bank, you know the corner? *[Rebecca nods quickly.]* I'll come in five minutes or so, do you mind waiting? *[Rebecca shakes her head "no" and smiles.]* You don't mind. You're a brave girl. *[She turns to go. Levison puts his arms round her from behind.]* But first I want a long kiss, a real kiss. *[Rebecca turns her head round and their lips meet. A long pause during which he kisses and caresses her.]* Now, run along, Rebecca, run along, my dear, I'll not be five minutes. *[She goes out, while he stands rooted in the middle of the room.]* She is a miracle, that girl, a blooming miracle! Seventeen, and kiss like that. She's everything—clever, bright, quiet—and beautiful. *[As if defending himself he speaks aloud.]* A lovely girl, any man might be proud of her—lovely and clever. What lips, what eyes! *[Going to his desk.]* If I'm the first she'll not repent it. She really cares for me, I do believe. How her lips trembled and clung! My God, I'm hot. But does she care for me? Or is it just my money? Well, what matter. Her kisses are just as sweet—perhaps sweeter. . . . She's well dressed, her father must make something. She'll deal with him. She told the truth. I need not trouble. It'll be all right. She cares for me a little perhaps. I must hurry. If she waits there long some fool of a clerk'll speak to her: D—n them! *[Pulls his desk to, and looks for his hat.]* How lovely she is, what lips, what a figure. *[Stands before the door.]* My heart's

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thumping, lips dry. I didn't believe I could feel like this. I'm more excited than I ever was in the biggest deal. By God, this is living. *[Goes out hastily]*

A YEAR LATER

[Isaac is in bed. Mrs. Goldschmidt comes into the room.]

Mrs. Goldschmidt. A gentleman to see you, Sir.

Isaac. To see me, a gentleman; I'm in bed. I'm not vell. Vot gentleman, vot's his name?

Mr. Levison [entering the room]. It's only me, Isaac. Thought I'd come to see you. Heard you had a cold. Bad enough to keep you in bed, is it?

Isaac. Oh, Mr. Levison, this is kind. Yes, it's pleurisy I've got. I vos out in the rain, and this doctor shtuff, he no good.

Mr. Levison [looking round]. Have you no one to wait on you but that old woman? Where's Rebecca?

Isaac. She vent out and has not come back yet. Young tings must go out.

Mr. Levison. But didn't she come back at three?

Isaac. She generally comes back about dree but I don't know today, I vos sleeping.

Mr. Levison. When did you awake?

Isaac. About a quarter of an hour ago. Vot time is it now?

Mr. Levison. After nine. But don't you know where she is? You must know. A self-willed young girl like that ought not to be out alone. You know where she is, don't you?

Isaac. Perhaps I do.

Mr. Levison. Well, where?

Isaac. Vy should I tell you?

Mr. Levison [getting angry]. Because I want to know, and I mean good to her and no one else does.

Isaac. So you say.

Mr. Levison. But why don't you help me when I say I mean good to her?

Isaac. Vy should I help you, Reuben Levison? You took my girl from me, persuaded her to go out vid you. You gave her dose sable furs, which she says are cheap shtuff. But ven I vos young I deal in furs at Lemberg, and I know. . . .

Mr. Levison. Well, what's that to you? You brought her to see me, didn't you? I didn't ask you to. You brought her for something?

Isaac. She wanted to go: she vos discontent: vot could I do? You vos old and I thought you might help her like a fader: she's so pretty.

Mr. Levison. Men don't feel like fathers to pretty girls; at any rate, I don't. And now she's got me. I care for her and want her. If she'll

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only play fair with me, I'll be good to her. She's a fool sometimes, too self-willed for anything. She's like a man. She just does what she wants to do. Now will you help me?

Isaac [weakly]. Vot can I do?

Mr. Levison. Does she go out with any one else, tell me? How did you guess the furs came from me? You know a lot, I expect.

Isaac. Perhaps I do, perhaps I don't.

Mr. Levison. Surely you want to help your daughter to get on, don't you?

Isaac. How do I know dot I am helping her? She told me often and often not to interfere.

Mr. Levison. But you must interfere, man. You must get her to be true to me. I'll give her more than anybody else.

Isaac. So you say.

Mr. Levison. If you'll help me all you can, I'll help you, give you an allowance, make it easy for you.

Isaac. Vot can you do more dan de doctors, and dey can't do noting. My head he ache and you cannot take it away. I get weaker every day, you can't make me stronger. I vish I could leave Rebecca some money; but I can't. . . .

Mr. Levison [shrugs shoulders] But, Isaac, tell me. Rebecca Was to have dined with me to-night. She did not come. I waited nearly an hour, and then I motored here. Where has she been in the meantime? Did she come here to-day at three?

Isaac. [The old man tosses his head wearily as if fatigued.] I don't know: I vos sleeping.

Mr. Levison. May I go into her room and look? It is in there? Isn't it? *[Pointing to a door.]*

Isaac [lifting himself in bed]. You must not, you must not. She would leave me altogether den.

Mr. Levison [looks at him angrily and shrugs his shoulders]. Damnation!

Isaac [awakened again]. Vot did you give her besides furs?

Mr. Levison. Oh, I don't know, dresses, whatever she wanted.

Isaac [nods his head.] Did you give her a jewelry—a golt bracelet?

Mr. Levison. No. Has she one?

Isaac. Who gave her de bracelet? My little girl!

Mr. Levison. A bracelet! *[He stands still.]* Come, Isaac, you know more than you say. Tell me, who gave it her?

Isaac. I know nozing. I don't know if she have bracelet. Rebecca's all right. Vy you bozzer me?

Mr. Levison. My God, my God! *[Taking a sudden resolution, sits down by the bed.]* Look here, Isaac. I'll marry her; I will, by God! I can't live without her. I'll marry her at once. Don't you say anything about what you have to said to me. But when she comes home, forbid her to go out again in the evening. Be firm. Say it is not kind to you. She's got a great affection for you. Say it's wrong to leave you alone,

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and I'll marry her, by God, I will. I always intended to since I knew I was the first, now my mind's made up.

Isaac. Rebecca's mind, perhaps he's not made up.

Mr. Levison. What do you mean, Isaac? You don't think she'll leave me in the lurch, and marry some one else, do you? You don't mean to say it's gone as far as that? Oh, my God, my God! Who is it? Tell me? Do!

Isaac. I know nozing. I've always told the trut.

Mr. Levison. All rot, that talk. You're damn cunning. You know a great deal more than you say. Why do you think she won't marry me?

Isaac. I know nozing. I tink if I vere a man tre times her age, like you, I'd marry her quick. All girls like marriage. You'll put it off and off. She say nozing, but she's very proud.

Mr. Levison. My God, I believe you're right, I've been a fool. She's everything I want, pretty, clever, and knows more than anybody'd guess. Will you fix it up, Isaac? Say you want her to marry me.

Isaac. No, you must do that. Why not wait for her, and say it yourself, or come in de morning?

Mr. Levison. Which would be the better day? One hardly knows what to do with her. She might be angry if I waited, and yet I hate to go away. What do you think, Isaac? Should I wait now, or should I come in the morning?

Isaac. I tink to-morrow, to morrow is anozer day.

Mr. Levison. Well, I'll go now and come back to-morrow, but put in a good word for me, Isaac, you'll see I can be grateful—later!

* * *

[About midnight. Rebecca, in Russian sables, comes into her father's room.]

Rebecca. You awake, father? Mrs. Goldschmidt's asleep. I thought I'd come in and see how you are.

Isaac. I'm awake, tear, I am awake, but vere have you been?

Rebecca. I have been to the theater.

Isaac. Really?

Rebecca. Really. Why shouldn't I tell you the truth? It's too much trouble to tell lies.

Isaac. Why didn't you go with Mr. Levison to dinner?

Rebecca [quickly]. Has he been here?

Isaac. Yes, my tear.

Rebecca. Well, what did he say?

Isaac. Oh, he say a lot of tings. He vant to know vere you vent. I told him I did not know. He asked me vedder you vere mit anybody else? I told him I not know.

Rebecca. That was right. I'll make Mr. Levison pay for prying.

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Isaac. Oh, I would not, Rebecca, I would not. He's a rich man, and means good to you. He wants to marry you.

Rebecca. To marry me! He didn't say so?

Isaac. He will propose. Oh, he's mad after you, mad. He will propose, he says so. He wanted to wait for you to-night

Rebecca [her eyes narrowing]. Because I did not meet him once or twice. He always wants to talk about himself and I want to go to the theatres and the opera. Oh, the opera! *[And she claps her hands.]* What else did he say to you, father? Tell me everything.

Isaac. Oh, he said he gave you the furs.

Rebecca. But how did he come to say he'd marry me? What made him say that? He has never said it to me.

Isaac [wearily]. I don't know. I asked him did he give you the gold bracelet. He says "no," and asks me who gave it to you? I say I don't know.

Rebecca. The bracelet? But no one has given me any bracelet. Why should any one give me a bracelet?

Isaac. [He shrinks.] Don't be angry with me, Rebecca, but I saw you with a bracelet once and I thought perhaps he had given you the bracelet.

Rebecca [laughing]. You amuse me. Don't you recognize your own things, you silly Dadda? I got a chain from your tray, from underneath, and plaited it round four times into a bracelet.

Isaac [sitting up in bed, excited]. That's what made him mad: That's why he wants to marry you: that's why.

Rebecca [nods head]. Oh, you clever, clever Dad! You made him jealous. You clever Dad, who would have thought you'd bring him up to the scratch?

Isaac. I did it not on purpose. It was just chance, or perhaps God, Rebecca, the God of our fathers!

Rebecca. Anyway, it's a bit of all right. *[Laughs triumphantly.]* I've always heard that God helps those who help themselves.